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# EDITORIAL



# HERE COMES OTAKULAND!!

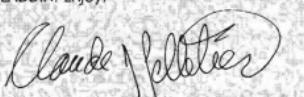
You can check out anytime you like  
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Hotel California, Eagles

Here at Janus, we never considered ourselves otaku. We have been fans (of science fiction, of models, of anime), but not fanatics. I have been told that, in Japan, "otaku" has pejorative connotation. It generally refers to young, male, fat, pimpled, no-life fanatics. Nothing that you'd want to become. The difference between a fan and an Otaku bears the same hue as that between a Trekkie and a Trekkier. However, we can't deny that "otaku" has taken a softer meaning in America. Here it simply means "fan," someone passionately interested about something. There is no shame about it. Although, if said by an outsider, a "mundane," otaku could still be intended as an insult.

The problem is that as we watched AnimEigo's OTAKU NO VIDEO, we recognize ourselves a bit in it. This video is funny and we highly recommend it. Through a self-parody of the General Products/Gainax adventure, it shows what is an otaku. It bears a (cynical) critical eye on it, but also tells fans to be proud of what they are. It proves that the anime fandom in Japan and in America are very much alike. Despite the cultural differences, the anime (proto-) culture is the same! The people watching videos late at night, quoting from anime, starting fanzines, etc. looked quite familiar to us. It brought back memories of our beginning. I remember, over ten years ago, dreaming of a place entirely dedicated to science fiction: a library, a room for RPGs, video games, etc. A kind of mini sci-fi theme park. OTAKULAND!! Well, we've got all otaku after all...

With this issue #22, PROTOCOLURE ADDICTS has taken another step in its endless efforts to satisfy fans. It now has a new look at least as good as MECHA PRESS. It also has eight additional pages to give more space to anime and to pictures. Having caught up on our late issues backlog, our main concern is to keep up with our schedule, to bring you the best of anime, and to inform you about what's REALLY GOING ON in anime and manga. The next step will be to put some color in PA, as we did in MECHA PRESS #7, and it could happen before the end of the year. Unfortunately, all those improvements are costly. We have cut our share (and profits), but we also must raise the cover price to \$3.95 and the subscription to \$24 (the price being the same in US and Canadian currencies to cover increasing mailing fees). The subscription price had not been raised for a long time and it was long overdue. However, we are offering a combo subscription deal if you subscribe to both PA and MP: \$50. It will be like subscribing to a monthly magazine with a dual theme. This offer is valid only until September 1st.

This issue focuses on KIMAGURE ORANGE ROAD, GIANT ROBO, US Renditions and AD Vision products, and on Disney's ALADDIN. Enjoy!

  
Claude J. Pelletier

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Alexandre Racine

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- ANIMEDIA 4-1987: 144; 7-1988: 21; 11-1988: insert.
- ANIME V 9-1992: 134; 12-1992: 16-19.
- APPLESEED manga #3. cover.
- B-CLUB 74(1-92): 82-83; 78(5-92): 3, 16; 80(7-92): 15, 45, 47.
- KOR CD: Loving Heart, book artwork.
- PORCO ROSSO Roman Album, cover.

All other illustrations comes from the promotional artwork or directly from the animation.

## DRAGONBALL-Z

### SO! WHAT'S NEW?

### ANIME CONNECTION

Every Monday, at 11:00 PM, Austin CABLE Access 10 will feature "The Anime Connection". This show will present subtitled animations, starting with SHURATO. Congratulations to Texas' fans.

### DESERT ROSE

DESERT ROSE is a new OVA based on a manga by Kaoru Shintani (AREA 88, CLEOPATRA DC). Released at the end of April, this 50-minute OVA is produced by J.C. Staff, and directed by Yasuao Aoki; characters/art designs by Minoru Yamasawa.

### DOMINION

There will be more DOMINION TANK POLICE! Masamune Shirow is working on six new independent OVA volumes. Production is by J.C. Staff and it is distributed by Bandai Visual.

### NOW COMICS

NOW Comics is reprinting its SPEED RACER Classics Volume One which collects 225 pages of original SPEED RACER comics from Japan, translated into English. BGW, \$4.95 US / \$6.95 Can..

If you didn't know about it yet, the character figures from Bandai DRAGONBALL-Z are available in North America. You can find them at PONY TOY retail stores and other specialty shops. Price varies depending on figure size. These are top quality miniatures. The characters are also available in their SEIYA stages.



## G I A N T R O B O



GIANTRBO, released in English by LA Hero and US Renditions, will also be released in theaters by Tara this summer. This is a superb OVA series based on a classic manga of the 50s. The animation is quite extraordinary (directed by Yasuhiro Imagawa, mechanical designs by Makoto Kobayashi, special effects by Hideaki Anno) and the soundtrack is one of the finest. A must either on video or in theatrical releases.

## IRRESPONSIBLE CAPTAIN TYLER

IRRESPONSIBLE CAPTAIN TYLER is based on a novel series by Hiroshi Yoshioka. The 26-episode series is animated by Tatsunoko and co-produced by Big West, King Record, VAP and Media Ring. It is not only shown on TV, but also released in thirteen video volumes (VHS & LD). A VERY funny series.



## D I R T Y P A I R

The DIRTY PAIR comic is back! Released in early May, DIRTY PAIR: SIM HELL is more cyberpunk than ever. \$2.50 US / \$3.15 CAN.

## ABDUCTION IN CHINATOWN



All of the non-stop action of Crying Freeman, part four, compiled in one exciting volume! What happens when the infamous tattooed leader of the "108 Dragons" is trapped by a mercenary organization headed by a beautifully treacherous woman who is sexually obsessed with him? An action-packed erotic adventure. *Abduction in Chinatown* is the newest Crying Freeman graphic novel. It captures all of the deadly intrigue and excitement of Part Four of the Crying Freeman saga in its entirety. This new 276 page graphic novel will be released in August and will feature the painstakingly detailed drawings of Ryōichi Ikegami (*Sanctuary, Mai, the Psychic Girl*) that fans all over North America have demanded for months. "This episode of the Crying Freeman saga is very unique," says VIZ's Managing Editor Satoru Fuji. "For the first time in the long-running story, Freeman must confront mercenaries - soldiers who are imprisoned in a life of violence and ostracized from normal society. They are not the gangsters and criminals that Freeman has faced in the past, and although he knows that he must fight and defeat them, he is empathetic to the tragedy of their inescapable situation, knowing that he too is a prisoner and a pariah."

The fourth episode of the popular Crying Freeman saga, *Abduction in Chinatown* is a sequel to *Portrait of a Killer, Shades of Death*, and *A Taste of Revenge*. In this episode, Freeman is summoned by one of the most prominent bosses of LS's Chinatown to search for his missing daughter and family, who have been kidnapped. Freeman suspects treachery from within and searches Chinatown to find the traitor. His pursuit leads him to the secret base of an international crime organization headed by a beautiful woman. The woman is sexually obsessed with Freeman and had planned the abduction as an elaborate trap to lure him into her lair. Now Freeman must destroy the organization and rescue the kidnapped family. The showdown will be in the ring and promises to be the match of his life. The final battle on a secret base on an isolated island is an exciting finale to this unique, long awaited novel. *Abduction in Chinatown* will be released on August 24th at the retail price of \$16.95 USA/\$24.25 Canada. Don't miss a minute of the action! (Viz Comics)

## ANIMERICA

### JULY ISSUE

The first ever English translation of The Crimson Pig in glorious colors! The July issue of Animerica will feature the world's most beloved animator, Hayao Miyazaki. Animerica pays tribute to the legendary creator of such anime and manga classics as *Nausicaä of the Valley of Wind*, *My Neighbor Totoro*, *Kiki's Delivery Service* and *Laputa Castle in the Sky*; with stories and profiles as well as with the first of three installments of Miyazaki's latest animated release, *The Crimson Pig* in glorious color!



### AUGUST ISSUE

This issue will contain exclusive interviews with Masamune Shirou AND Hayao Miyazaki. By day he's a mild-mannered high school teacher. By night he's Masamune Shirou, the brilliant sci-fi manga artist who has created such manga mega-hits as APPLESSEED, DOMINION and ORION. Manga and animation fans are captivated by the cyberpunk adventures that Shirou creates so diligently. The distinctive detailing with which he crafts the mecha and the inherent sensuality of his heroes and heroines definitely sets his work apart. However his stories go beyond just sex and the cyborgs. They evoke strong feelings and emotions, and raise significant questions about the human condition.

## ANTARCTIC PRESS

### On The Move:

ZETRA! Antarctic Press have recently moved to new offices and facilities. Everything is going upscale. According to Production Manager Pat Duke, "Ben Dunn and his crew will be served better to provide readers with even more quality releases!". Their new address is:

**ANTARCTIC PRESS, 7272 Wurzach Suite 204,  
San Antonio, TX, 78240 U.S.A**

Speaking of Antarctic Press, they have just released their first issue of H-BOMB, their adult doujinhish-style book. Drawn by Japanese manga artists, H-BOMB features sexual parodies of various popular animations. Issue one is devoted to "Dirty Angels". Look for our review in issue 23.

More Antarctic Press: they are under contract to draw a new manga-like series for Malibu: Project A-Ko. Release of the first issue is due for this fall (October or November), with no firm date set.

## ENTERNITY COMICS

### New Releases:

**CAPTAIN HARLOCK: THE MACHINE PEOPLE** by Robert W. Gibson & Tim Eldred. While trying to discover who was behind the defeat of the Illumidi, Harlock discovers a new group of enemies. Also, the origin of Captain Harlock. Began in May, \$2.50.

**SPEED RACER/NINJA HIGH SCHOOL** - written by Mark Levine. Entropy Comics and Now Comics will produce a crossover 4-part mini-series due in June. Now will publish parts 1 & 3 (under the title of SPEED RACER) and Entropy will do #2 & 4 (under the NHS label). Color, polybagged, \$2.50 US/ \$2.95 Can.

**ZILLION #1** - story by Tom Mason, art by Harrison Fong. A science fiction future Earth series based on the popular anime series. An alien group of savage warriors attacks an outlying Earth colony in 2387. Began in April, B&W, \$2.50.

**ROBOTECH: RETURN TO MACROSS** - written by Bill Spangler, illustrated by Mujib Rahiman. Presents the adventures of Roy Fokker on Macross Island and Breeita's fleet as they search for Earth and the mighty super-dimensional fortress SDF-1. Began in March. Malibu is exploring the possibility of importing and translating its own line of manga, in competition with Viz Comics.

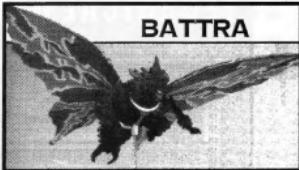
There is also a rumor that they are negotiating for the rights of an **ORGUSS** comic, based on the animation released by LA Hero and US Renditions. The artist could be Tim Eldred.

From The Rose #36

# New Type

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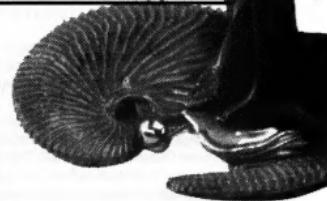
GODZILLA



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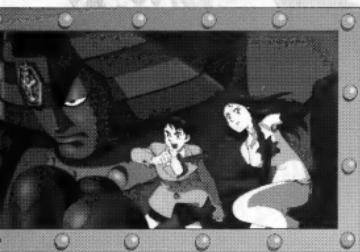
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# GIANT ROBO

## OVERVIEW

by Martin Ouellette

Previewed at last year's ANIME EXPO, GIANT ROBO is finally making thundering inroads in North America. Already episodes one and two are commercially available on laser disc. Moreover, Tara Releasing has announced a theatrical release for the series, while US Renditions will be doing the English dubbed OVA series. All this before year's end.

Without any doubt, GIANT ROBO is one of the best OVA's to appear in a long, long time. Part of the trend to return to older times, this animation is the perfect example of how to turn something old into something new — something that is becoming a trend in animation and cinema: take an old, underworked series or live-action show, redo all the characters and designs... et voilà! In GIANT ROBO's case, the result is an incredible animation that people will gobble up like hot cakes and ask for more.

GIANT ROBO, the animated version of a classic genre film, is the creation of Yoshihiro Imagawa, who also brought us the fantastic AURA BATTLER DUNBINE. In effect, this is almost a guarantee that there will be a good story to propel the animation. GIANT ROBO is not only a remake, but almost a pastiche of the pulp action serials (1920-30s era story genre with a 50's style).

The mecha design is by Makoto Kobayashi, but an influence is felt: Hideaki Anno's. The acclaimed technical director seems to have made quite an impression, for GIANT ROBO itself and all the other technical design's are very much in the Anno genre: a return to rounder, larger scale forms instead of the highly technical approach of which he has grown tired (as he mentioned during a panel at Animecon '91). Effectively, whether influenced or not, the designs are more human, making the machines more like characters than mechanical weapons or devices.

The animation itself is fluid and bursts with vivid colors, giving the characters a liveliness that has not been seen since "AKIRA". The editing and montage is very cinematographic, with fantastic scenography, wild image blends and fades worthy of Orson Welles' "Citizen Kane". However, what really gets the audience is the music.

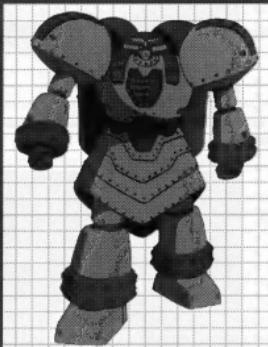
It quite simply gives the feeling of those 30's action movies (like Errol Flynn's "Robin Hood") that we liked so much as kids. Some of the tracks are reminiscent of opera work, and this gives the story a tragic mood that could not have been achieved by the usual synthesized soundtracks.

The story itself grips the viewer in a way which keeps one on the edge of his seat. The story is this: A secret organization named "BIG FIRE" wants to dominate the world. Another organization, the INTERNATIONAL POLICE ORGANIZATION (IPO) is trying to stop BIG FIRE. Both organizations use "Experts" (paramedics) and giant robot machines. They are after the same thing: the key to control the Shizuma drive, a form of energy which is pollution-free and wholly recyclable. BIG FIRE has developed a new type of drives which renders all Shizuma drives useless... on a global level.

Most of the first episode is used to explain the story behind the Shizuma drive (while leaving plenty of loose threads). The episode, in genre, finishes on a cliff hanger as BIG FIRE attack the IPO base to try and eliminate Professor Shizuma, creator of the drive. Episode two is as good as the first, with a few more explanations, more climactic battles, the introduction of

- new characters and another cliff hanger ending. To be frank, we can hardly wait for episode 3.
- If you have the opportunity to watch GIANT ROBO, please do so. The story is not complicated, but it is well told and superbly rendered. Once you have seen GIANT ROBO, you will never see robot animation the same way.

## TECHNICAL DATA



### GIANT ROBO

**Height:** 30 meters

**Weight:** 1500 tons

**Flight Speed:** 565 km/h

**Armament:** Missiles, Torpedoes, Cannons.

**Full weapon complement undisclosed.**

One of three robots built by BIG FIRE under the supervision of Professor Kusama, Daisaku's father. It is the only surviving robot of his type: when Prof. Kusama discovered the intents of BIG FIRE, he destroyed the others and "slaved" GIANT ROBO to Daisaku. Is Robo just a machine? Apparently not since he seems able to feel when Daisaku is in grave danger. He's then able to activate and act on his own will, without Daisaku's help/orders. Perhaps the spirit of Daisaku's dead parents inhabit GIANT ROBO? This mystery is yet to be resolved.

# GIANT ROBO CHARACTER GUIDE

by Patrick Lapointe

**GIANT ROBO** being very much a modernized serialized pulp, we decided to split the cast of characters in the only possible way: good and evil, heroes and villains, the good guys and the bad guys!

## THE GOOD GUYS



Under the protective umbrella of the International Police Organization (IPO), the world peace is protected from such threats as BIG FIRE. Each country has its own branch and the top ranks of the organization are maintained by the Experts, a group of people possessing special abilities. The term "Expert" has been coined to reflect the very specialized ability that each person belonging to that group has, whether it be mystical, mechanical or intellectual. The IPO's main branch seems to be Beijing, though the headquarters are China's Shangtung province at Ryozanpaku.

## DAISAKU KUSAMA



- Only son of the creator of Giant Robo, he's the only one that can control Giant Robo. Through a radio voice-emitter, Giant Robo usually obeys Daisaku's every word. He is barely twelve years old and he has already become one of BIG FIRE's prime targets for termination. From one of Tetsugyu's comments, it is clearly understood that many an agent has died to save Daisaku.

- Daisaku's parents were killed by BIG FIRE when his father discovered the real intentions of BIG FIRE. He is not an only child, but the only person he relates to is his Giant Robo. Young, innocent, Daisaku is very idealistic and quite impressed by the technology and the beauty of the Shizuma drive. Caught in a world of adults, Daisaku is a child both brave and tenacious: he never gives up.

## GINREI



- The 18 year-old daughter of professor Franken von Fogler, she has sided with the IPO, against

- her own brother. She carries the burden of guilt left by her father's implication in the Bashyralle tragedy. She seems to be honor bound to right the wrongs caused by BIG FIRE and stop at all cost the reoccurrence to another Bashyralle tragedy. She has a motherly/big sister attitude towards Daisaku, and has little respect for Taiso and Tetsugyu's carousing attitude.

- An IPO expert based in Beijing, her special ability is teleportation: a very rare power, but it takes a lot out of her, and might kill her. She's a crackshot and easily wields the standard IPO high-powered gun. Her communicator is her ring that shines red when a voice transmission is received. She has apparently developed an alternate identity to confuse BIG FIRE's intelligence: IRON MASK. She used this identity/disguise in the opening sequences of "The Black Attaché Case".

## TAISO



- The most powerful and versatile of the IPO's Experts. The tag "Chinese Knight" fits nicely to this raucous and yet wise man. His special power enables him to run like the wind and enhances his mastery of the Chinese Martial Art "Funshaken" (Flying Fist or "Jit Fist"). He always carries a traditional gourd (its cap is his radio communicator) filled with sake, a liquor that focuses his powers and of which he seems very fond. His outward carousing attitude is just a facade; he is a responsible, honorable man, ready to die for the causes he champions.

# SPOTLIGHT

## TETSUGYU



The Iron Ox. Recruited at the age of 12 (he is now 25), he is probably the strongest Expert. He favors chained axes in combat and also uses them to focus his special ability to transform power into a controlled hurricane-like force. This is called "Kiko Senpu", Spiritual Force Hurricane. A bit simple-minded, he is as willing as the man he calls brother (Aniki). Taiso, to die for the cause. When he sets his mind on doing something, he does it! He has an intense crush in Ginrei and is thus a bit jealous of the attention she gives Daisaku. His communicator is built into his wrist bracers.

## GO-GAKUJIN



Professor Go-Gakujin. Chief scientist of the Beijing IPO branch, he is usually calm and very collected. He displays little emotion except in the face of imminent or apparent doom. He is an adamant supporter of the Shizuma drive, and seems a bit over his head scientifically in the current situation. He's an Expert whose power is also focused through a martial art: "Tessensu" or the Iron Fan, which was an art

- practiced by courtiers and administrative officers of China during the medieval China period.
- Apparently, he's the only one who has established some sort of a confidant-aide relationship with Chief Nakajo.

## KENJI MURASAME



The lone expert caught in the Paris incident. A 27 year-old snappy (if not foppish) dresser, he's an Expert attached to the Paris branch of the IPO. He's a lone wolf whose ability is not readily apparent. He infiltrates the Big Fire base and tries to sabotage the installation. He's also the only one who has witnessed the "apparition" of Prof. von Fogler.

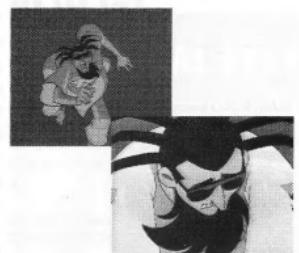
## CHIEF NAKAO



The stern and aloof director of the Beijing IPO branch. Very little is known about him until he

- joined the IPO and even then! He is a private person, remaining well above the situation, never losing his calm. Apparently distant to all, the IPO members have learned to trust implicitly the 45-year old man. He has yet to display any special ability or power. He always carries a pipe.

## PROFESSOR SHIZUMA



The Nobel prize winner for the solution to modern society's pollution and energy problems. He pushed his collaborators — Dr. Duncan, Prof. Shimure and von Fogler, and Mr. Trumbeau — hard, and though the project was a success in the end, Prof. Shizuma is wrecked by guilt to the point of catatonia. He fears he's also responsible for the Bashyralle tragedy and is the only one who truly seems to understand what is about to happen and how so. Almost cowardly, he knows his honor was lost a long time ago. At Bashyralle.

## THE BAD GUYS



The bad guys are first and foremost an organization: BIG FIRE. Dedicated to global conquest, BIG FIRE is a mysterious organization and whose true leader is not known. In military style, the lower ranks are hierarchically structured. First comes the unknown leader of BIG FIRE, followed by the Top Ten Elite — a group of evil experts — and then three ranks of agents: A, B and C. BIG FIRE has amassed

a wealth of technology and commands gigantic machine/robots as tools of conquest. Yet, the IPO — with GIANT ROBO — has now become the thorn at their side.

### GENYA



The son of Franken von Fogler and, like his father, a great scientist. He leads the current effort to bring the world under BIG FIRE's domination, even though he is but an A type agent.

He has recurring dreams of the Bashyralle tragedy, and sometimes he even seems possessed by the spirit of his father. Genya has decided to avenge his memory by recreating the Bashyralle tragedy on a global scale. The world has too easily dismissed his father, creator of mankind's new prosperity. He wears the same pendant as Ginrei.

### LORD ALBERTO



38-year old, he's one of the oldest member of Big Fire's Top Ten Elite. He can manipulate

- shock waves, which enable him to run at high speed and focused earthquakes. He is a distinguished older man who cares little about Genya. He is afraid of nothing and his personal honor apparently comes before BIG FIRE success.

- He bears a grudge against Taiso: he lost an eye and an ear in a previous battle against the latter. Further, Taiso has also caused the demise of Alberto's closest friend (only referred to as illusion Cervantes).

### IVAN



- Partner and/or underling of Lord Alberto, the 32-year old Ivan has very little respect except for his personal master, Lord Alberto, with whom his loyalties lie. He drives Lord Alberto's transformable car and pilots the BIG FIRE robot Uranus. Ivan can move at high speeds and uses this energy as a kinetic force when he strikes. He tends to gloat and show off, and has fiery impulses.

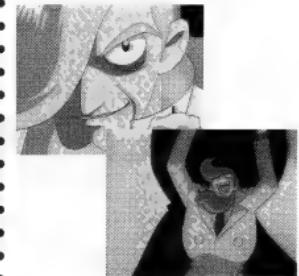
### KO-ENSHAKU



- Robot, android, warrior spirit, demon? This armored man wears a mask and a cape. He

- neither speaks nor displays any emotion. He performs his duty, and obeys orders given by an unknown commander. Even when the members of the operation salute to BIG FIRE, Ko-Enshaku is silent and immobile. He's suspected of being an observer/plant who reports to high command the results of the operation.

### PROFESSOR FRANKEN von FOGLER



- One of the five scientists who made the Shizuma drive a reality, but Professor Shizuma pushed his collaborator too hard. He was once a good man, well-meaning, but the pressure of the research and the undertaking at a madman's pace of the first large size Shizuma drive facility drove him insane. He is thought to be responsible for the Bashyralle incident, where he supposedly died when he abruptly triggered the experiment.

- He apparently has a son and a daughter who are none other than Genya and Ginrei. Both wear a small pendant, identical to each other's.

### EVIL ROBOT



# GIANT ROBO

## SYNOPSIS

by Patrick Lapointe

**It is now a brave new world. Mankind has entered an era of renewed prosperity with the invention of the Shizuma Drive. This Third Energy Revolution has solved the problems of modern-day society's energy needs. Peace has settled upon the world, a peace that is disrupted by the BIG FIRE organization, which seeks to conquer the world.**

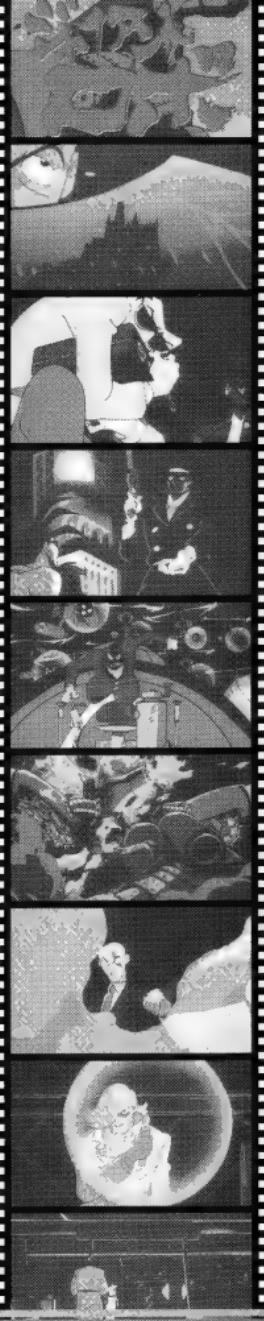
On the other hand, the Experts of Justice have gathered and formed the INTERNATIONAL POLICE ORGANIZATION (IPO) to combat the threats of BIG FIRE. Among these Experts is a boy, Daisaku Kusama, who commands the the world's most powerful robot: GIANT ROBO!

### EPISODE ONE THE BLACK ATTACHE CASE

Genya, agent of BIG FIRE awaits the report of Ivan who has brought him two Shizuma drive variation samples. Lord Alberto, member of the TOP TEN ELITE (BIG FIRE's top operatives), listens carefully: one of the samples is missing. It is in the hands of Professor Shizuma, but not for long, they think.

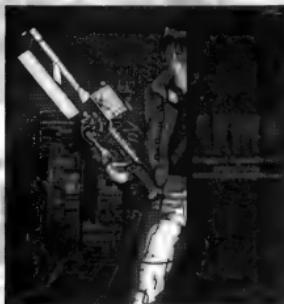
The scene moves from Genya's castle to the top of a high-speed train: a BIG FIRE agent, Q Boss, is threatening Prof. Shizuma to hand over the black attaché-case which contains the third sample. Shizuma would rather die than hand it over. Q Boss raises his pistol, while Shizuma awaits his death, covering behind the case. A shot rings. He is still alive. He looks up to see Q Boss holding his bloodied hand as he drops his pistol. The IRON MASK jumps into the fray from another running train and rescues the professor. The professor, worried, discovers just now that the IPO is rescuing him as Ginrei reveals herself to be the IRON MASK. They leap off the train onto another and into the

- arms of Tetsugyu... except for Ginrei. Q Boss orders his agents to pursue.
- From a BIG FIRE train, miniature helicopters take off to pursue our heroes. Meanwhile, Ginrei considers teleporting herself and the professor to safety. Tetsugyu stops her and takes care of the situation unleashing his terrible Black Whirlwind... with the professor hanging on to him for dear life. The helicopters are dispatched, but Q Boss transforms his train into a robot and launches it after the heroes. Ginrei's ring communicator activates: Daisaku is on his way, with GIANT ROBO! The BIG FIRE robot is destroyed and our heroes return to IPO's Beijing command with Professor Shizuma and the precious case.
- At BIG FIRE HQ, Ivan reports that the IPO has the last sample. Lord Alberto suggests the elimination of Daisaku, once and for all. Genya, leader of the operation, arrogantly takes control of the situation angering Ivan, but this outburst is quelled by Genya's mention of Ko Enshaku, the observer from BIG FIRE's High Command. Then, Paris is rocked by a strange earthquake.
- Kenji Murasame, of the IPO, witnesses first hand the catastrophe as he finds the body of two scientists from the Shizuma drive development team hung on the bells of Notre-Dame cathedral. He hears a voice, and turns to see the impossible: Franken von Fogler! "Revenge!" he cries, and then disappears, leaving Murasame alone to behold the death of Paris' lights.
- At IPO Beijing, Professor Go summarizes the situation for Chief Nakajo using the satellites pictures of Paris: every Shizuma drive has ceased to function! This triggers an idea in both Ginrei and Chief Nakajo: so the Shizuma drive is responsible again, like the Bashytalle tragedy. Go denies vehemently the supposition, not quite convincing the Chief. Nakajo also deduces that the two scientists were eliminated because they might interfere and/or have known what was actually happening. Meanwhile the airship of the IPO, the "Greta Garbo", returns to the IPO Beijing center, with Prof. Shizuma, Taiso, Daisaku and Giant Robo.
- Giant Robo is parked inside the facility. Taiso and Tetsugyu rejoice at seeing each other again. Taiso comments that Tetsugyu returned from Nanking alone with Ginrei, embarrassing Tetsugyu. The latter comments how the damn brat, Daisaku, rescued them, but Taiso puts him in his place. The agents then report to Chief





- Nakajo, Daisaku speaking for all and handing over the case to Professor Go. Dismissed, Ginrei goes to check on the condition of Prof. Shizuma. He's been mostly silent, but he sometimes mutters: "He's coming... Fogler is coming..."
- Later outside, Ginrei joins Daisaku, who is enjoying himself, watching lifts getting their Shizuma Drives changed. Tetsugyu and Taiso appear and invite young Daisaku for an evening on the town. Ginrei comments that Daisaku should not be with such spoiled overgrown children and asks him out on a date, sending Tetsugyu reeling! Daisaku refuses: "I have to help with the maintenance of Giant Robo". Tetsugyu then tries his chance, but she turns him down. Taiso offers him a sip of his sake.
- Meanwhile, Chief Nakajo and Professor Go travel down into the bowels of the base (an old nuclear plant) and discuss the situation over the captured sample: a large metallic object has been detected below Notre-Dame, with active power sources within! The Professor deduces that the Paris effect is limited because BIG FIRE needs the third sample. And both believe that only Fogler could make such a device. They fear that if the third sample falls into the hands of BIG FIRE, the Bashytalle Tragedy will repeat itself.
- **(Flashback, 10 years ago)**
- We see Fogler ranting and raving about the culmination of his research and the apogee of mankind: the coming of the Beautiful Night! He triggers the experiment, detonating a cataclysmic explosion and shockwave covered with darkness. The other four scientists, Shizuma included, escape, while the Bashytalle plant collapses with the echoes of Fogler's ravings of the Beautiful Night.
- Genya's is awoken by a dream of Fogler and his ravings. The phone rings: Lord Alberto is on the trail of the IPO agents and Prof. Shizuma. Genya later confirms Lord Alberto's orders: terminate Shizuma. Murasame, on the outside, considers infiltrating BIG FIRE's base.
- In Peking, Lord Alberto lands at the airport and is picked up by Ivan, they are stopped by a traffic jam caused by a drunken Tetsugyu. Lord Alberto decides to walk to IPO's Beijing base, leaving Ivan to "other" duties.
- Taiso and Tetsugyu are enjoying a copious, sake filled meal. Tetsugyu empties his heart to Taiso: "What's so special about Giant Robo?
- And Daisaku who thinks he's alone fighting BIG FIRE?" Taiso calms him some, pointing out that Tetsugyu is jealous of Daisaku because he and Ginrei are so close. That Daisaku is just twelve years old with a big responsibility: "The only thing we can do is help him grow into a honest person." Suddenly their communicators activate: Lord Alberto is attacking the base.
- Lord Alberto is shredding the Beijing base to pieces and no one can stop him. Chief Nakajo orders Professor Go and Ginrei to escape with Shizuma, Daisaku, and the sample. They jump in a car, Ginrei at the wheel. Lord Alberto, "escorted" by Ko-Enshaku, chases them. Lord Alberto unleashes a shock blast which Professor Go manages to deflect with his fans, to the victorious cheers of Daisaku. Lord Alberto no longer plays: he creates a shockwave that breaks the ground, catching the car and making it crash. Lord Alberto is about to finish them off when Taiso arrives to the rescue.
- Taiso tells Tetsugyu to set the car straight and get away while they can: he'll deal with Lord Alberto. The two opponents stand-off. It's going to be to the death this time. The escapees now plan their getaway: they will get to the Greta Garbo and make for the IPO Headquarters in Ryozanpaku. As they are driving full speed on an ocean drive, Tetsugyu asks the professor what is in the case. He explains that though it is not unlike a regular Shizuma Drive, it is what caused the Bashytalle tragedy.
- Shizuma, silent in the car, flashes back to the tragedy and finally speaks: "I'm sorry! It's all my fault! Help me! I can't take it anymore! I should never have created the Drive! Save me from Fogler!" Suddenly, a flying robot of giant size stops the car: Ivan, piloting the robot Uranus, demands Shizuma and the case.
- At the base, without any warning or command, Giant Robo launches. This astounds everyone, but, more importantly, it surprises Taiso whose thoughts turn to Daisaku. Lord Alberto takes advantage of the moment: he grabs him by the throat and discharges shockwave after shockwave into Taiso.
- What will happen to our heroes? Will they survive? Will the black attache case fall in BIG FIRE's hands? And what is this Beautiful Night? Follow the adventure in our next episode! TO BE CONTINUED!



# AKIRA'S NEO-TOKYO BEAT

AKIRA soundtrack (1990)  
Gelnoh Yamashirogumi group  
JVC label, JVC Musical Industries Inc. USA

This is music that forces you to stop and listen. At first, it is music that is strange if not down right weird for the listener. One must be ready and willing to invest in listening to this music for the rewards are a thousand fold! It is super intelligent music. There is a strong cultural message in the tones, themes and overall melodies. The whole surpasses the frontiers of the imagination, even the one set by the visual package offered by the animation. This music stands on its own, yet it translates the movie, adding a rich frame to the overall perception. The soundtrack offers the greatest level of maturity, giving the listeners the maximum effect and interrelation to the movie. It is very difficult to do better than this.

The track by track: track 1 is the most beautiful introduction to the underlying theme of the soundtrack and to the subject matter of the film. The sober yet powerful mood displays the composer's intelligence. Very effective, if not a stroke of genius. Track 2 displays the same intelligence and the meshing of the opening theme and the theme of track 1 is superbly done. Track 3 leaves me with little to say except 9.5 out of 10. Tracks renders a melange of themes in progression. This is very subtle, but complex work. Track 5 scares the listener. It is of a terrible efficiency and the innocent voices create a fear that is almost a disease. Track 6 requires that the listener opens the door to his mind. Then one is touched, vibrating, to the music. It is almost being part of a communion. Track 7 reveals power and efficiency through minimal means, but obtaining a maximum of effect. Track 8, or the chase, is a vivid musical representation of its visual father. Track 9 feels like it is related to the Japanese culture and the difference can be strongly felt. It is difficult to tame this piece, but the spectacle is worth the effort to feel some of the most beautiful features of the Japanese culture. Track 10 is a musical masterpiece of composition, performance and effect. It is A REQUIEM! Starting from the sacred to a joy of life that is almost touchable. That is how to close a story and then offer even more.

There is a down side: this soundtrack can not be recommended lightly. The pieces and overall music are less melodic to what one would expect. There is not even the required or expected

- minimum North American
- listeners are accus-
- tomed to. Still, it is
- rare music that has
- kept its culture in
- each form and
- measure. One
- cannot listen to
- this music con-
- tinually, but
- when one does,
- it is worth every
- moment of it.
- Buy or Die.
- 
- 
- 





# GIANT ROBO I AND II THE MUSIC

Masamichi Amano  
and the Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra  
Emotion label, APOLLON INC.

Delight! A full live orchestra soundtrack. Already this is considered a treat in "conventional" cinema, and now on animation! A rare occasion worth noting: a big "Hooray" to the planners and the accounting people who authorized it. Now, what did Mr. Amano, the composer, do with it...

The soundtrack for GIANT ROBO is very elaborate; almost to excess. The symphonic approach makes a tremendous difference, enabling the music to stand by itself, but it is also a much more difficult approach to master. The composer had a lot at his disposal, even a choir with strong soloists, and he did a lot with it. His themes are "classical", if not unremarkable some times, but the effects live. The themes, when repeated, are arranged and played with nice variations: there is action, contemplation, and after seeing the animation, it works!

From GIANT ROBO I, there are a few worthy tracks. Number 6, which is repeated with variations (7, 11, 12) has a grand feel which is beautiful in every version. I personally like it a lot. Track 9 is easy going and contrasts markedly with the rest. It is the first time we feel true emotion (and the first time we clearly hear the piano). Track 15 is reminiscent of Barry Gray (THUNDERBIRDS), with a nice progression. Track 19, the closer, has a great hook which reinforces the serial feel.

GIANT ROBO II, when compared with GIANT ROBO I, is a tad disappointing: it falls a bit flat, probably because the themes are already very familiar. A difference to note is the use of "spaghetti western" themes, very interesting. Track 2 is so dramatic that more dramatic than that and you die. Track 3 reflects the composer's style: force over subtlety, but the complexity therein shows nice workmanship. The instrument choice reflects a nice spread of emotions. Track 5 is a great example of how the choice of an instrument can make all the difference: the organ is a stroke of genius and originality. Track 14 is the best track of both recordings: romantic, lyrical and it communicates emotions.

Amano's style lies in power and he seems a bit too cautious: GIANT ROBO I is built around the visual package, and the composer fills up gaps between scenes instead of trying to create a theme. GIANT ROBO II fits less with the animation, possibly a lack of coordination. On a sad note, the heroes theme could have been more than what was offered too us. It is epic, but not heroic, not human. Still, both offerings are great. If I were to choose a compact disc over the other, I would lean towards GIANT ROBO I. Yet, the "GIANT ROBO Symphonie" might create a surprise...



# KIMAGURE ORANGE ROAD

by Patrick Lapointe

"One meeting led to two love. Three trembling hearts play a gentle melody."

KIMAGURE ORANGE ROAD (KOR)... Whimsical Orange Road... This series is not just the typical love triangle soap opera. It is a lot more. KOR is the story of three young teenagers walking the road to adulthood. The fact that the lead character is an ESPer (endowed with extra-sensory powers) does not facilitate things, for his powers must remain secret. The additional fact that the two other characters of the triangle are childhood friends, almost sisters, does not help at all. KOR is a series where the viewer can go back to his high school days: dream a little, blush a little, feel embarrassed and unsure a little, and definitely sigh a lot.

Created by Izumi Matsumoto, a then-unknown young artist with rock and roll dreams, KOR the manga first appeared in 1984 in the pages of SHONEN JUMP. A popular story, the animation series project was drafted in the middle of 1986. The first episode aired on NTV (Nippon TV) Monday April 6th, 1987, at 7:30 PM. The series then ran until 1988. The final show of the forty-eight episode series appeared on March 1988. Yet, the curtain was only truly called with the movie "I want to return to that day".

A boy-oriented series, KOR was a solid success, but not a flamboyant one. The character of Madoka Ayukawa might well have carried the TV series on her shoulders (she can do it!). According to a survey (Animedia, February 1988 issue), KOR landed in the fifth spot for "Most Popular Series" of 1987, far behind SAINT SEIYA, JJ, GUNDAM ZZ, DRAGONAR, and with MAISON IKKOKU and CITY HUNTER close behind. However, related products - especially the music - gave the series a second life which resulted in the movie and a series of OVA's.

Produced by STUDIO PIERROT for TOHO, the series was helmed by Ozamu Kobayashi. The screenplay was by Kenji Terada. The "sakkan" position (chief animation director) was held by Masako Goto, while Shichiro Kobayashi filled the shoes of chief artistic director. Renown Toru Furuya lent his voice talents for Kyosuke Kasuga, the lead male character, while Hiromi Tsuru almost embodied Madoka Ayukawa. Not surprisingly, the characters were designed by Akemi Takada. Her style is easily recognizable through her previous work in MAISON IKKOKU and URUSEI YATSURA. Her drawings - mostly for Madoka - came very close to those of Izumi Matsumoto's manga original.

There are many interesting points to KOR. First and most obvious is the nostalgia element. The story is set during the high school period of the main characters. The viewers can easily identify not only with the setting - after all most of us are or were once high school students - but with the emotional situations. There is the ever-present peer pressure and feelings associated with growing up to be an adult (one of Kyosuke's first comment to Madoka is on "having babies"), the learning about friendships and relationships, and - living the joys, pains, and responsibilities



## NIGHT OF SUMMER SIDE

- Accelerator's scream from tires that streak Coupe, with your women on dashed out!
- Run away, shut the door
- "I don't care where, just run!" you said.
- Encounter is a highway junction
- By the time I saw the harbor
- I now know that I'm in love.
- Take me to summer side
- You said you preferred gentleness to a kiss
- Night of summer side
- With an innocent look in your eye, of an adult
- A mast's shadow lines the waveless inlet
- I walked on the pier holding your shoulder
- "I'm not very good at this" bursting into laughter.
- You slipped through my arms like dancing cheating kindness
- What are you looking for?
- We don't need reasons for love.
- Take me to summer side
- Seems that I flew long the deck
- Night of summer side
- Straighten the back
- You will not be somebody else
- And we kissed (didn't we?)
- If you don't hurry, summer will end
- I can't hide the emotions from my face.
- Take me to summer side
- You said I prefer a kiss to loneliness"
- Night of summer side
- And the way you looked at me was of an adult
- Take me to summer side love
- <orange road love>



## MIRAGE OF SUMMER

Sprinkling a spell  
on a playful mind  
I want to catch your heart

Love is déjà-vu  
Memories I can't remember  
Yet I can feel the overlapping lips

LOVE ME — tenderly!  
Golden summer mirage  
SOMEDAY, SOMEDAY  
A kiss on a skip please  
In the morning we're called Lovers  
SOMEDAY, SOMEDAY  
I'll be waiting always

Airship floating  
between the valley of buildings  
There's a feeling not unlike vertigo

Stretching out fingers  
Letters without words  
Let it go in the wind  
We might meet again

LOVE ME — eternally!  
White doves floating in the wind  
TELL ME, TELL ME  
When will love come  
The day I hold him  
TELL ME, TELL ME  
I'll be waiting always  
In the Iris of perusian blue  
Show me mysterious future

LOVE ME — tenderly!  
Golden summer mirage  
SOMEDAY, SOMEDAY  
A kiss on a skip Please  
In the morning we're called lovers  
SOMEDAY, SOMEDAY  
I'll be waiting always

# SPOTLIGHT

- associated with them. Culturally, there are little differences between being a North American high school student and a Japanese one; they are almost nonexistent; at least as displayed in the series.

- The story itself is for romantics. It is a typical soap opera with the added "kick" of ESP not just as plot instruments, but as plot elements. The sense of evolution to a climax in the story and the characters make for an overall appealing mix.

- Humor plays a great part in Japanese animation series and KOR holds true to form. From the idiotic slapstick jokes (Hatta's nosebleeds), to the complete episode pastiche (T.A.P. GUN), KOR offers a great deal, in addition to an ugly monster they dare call a cat. Moreover, certain characters carry most of the humor angle: Hatta and Komasu, Kyosuke's "truest" friends; the Romeo and Juliet parody with the Umma and Ushiko cameos; Kurumi's antics; Jingoro also known as (supposedly) the cat; Yusaku Hino's the martial art whiz kid and local bumbler; and last but not least, the elusive katsu-sand! (More later. Promise.)

- Though most of the vocal pieces of KOR range from the usual Japanese pop to the fantastic "Janeena" (see our reviews in PA Issue 21), the greatest musical achievement of KOR lies in the background soundtrack. It is cleverly used and often brought to the fore to enhance certain scenes. The Madoka sax sequences as well as the use of contemporary themes, such as Simon & Garfunkel's "Sound of Silence", bring to KOR an almost unsurpassed emotional element.

- The most compelling aspects of the series are the dialogues and soliloquies performed by the characters. There is a high level of believability in the emotional puzzles discussed by and in-between characters. The interventions made by secondary characters - even the dumbest - hold relevancy to the emotional development and evolution of the story line. The series, being focused around Kyosuke Kasuga, gives great importance to his introspective soliloquies. Kyosuke is often portrayed thinking about the situation, trying to resolve his own confusion and making up his mind. This leads to fantastic scenes involving flashbacks and dream sequences.

- And there is still more! A lot of subtleties, easily missed or dismissed upon first viewing, are knitted into the fabric of the series. This is where viewers can enjoy to another extent the artistic work performed by the creators of KOR. Such scenes and elements, like the sand castle in episode 19, improve and enrich the series. Another classic is the fountain scene of episode 7, where viewers witness both the indecisiveness of Kyosuke and the two couples going their own way. Sensational!

- Overall, KOR is an above average series. It possesses strong emotional moments and a good storyline. If you long for your high school days, a touch of romance and a lot of pleasure, KIMAGURE ORANGE ROAD is for you.



# ORANGE ROAD CHARACTERS

by Alain Dubreuil  
& Patrick Lapointe

## KASUGA KYOSUKE



This young fifteen years old transfer student is the unlikely hero and principal character of the series. Caught in the heated period of "seishun" (youth-hood), he is the kind-hearted, well-meaning, disheveled and a bit idiotic "nice guy". Kyosuke is also caught between two heartbeats as his brain and heart collide: he cannot decide who he truly loves, Madoka or Hikaru. On one side, he longs to be with secretive and ever-changing Ayukawa, but he likes Hikaru's openness, whole-hearted generosity and unabashedly-declared love. Furthermore, Kyosuke is chained by the reality of his paranormal powers: he, as well as his two sisters and mother, have extra-sensorial powers, and the family cannot afford to reveal this secret. Nicknamed "Mister Wishy-Washy" by his friends Hatta and Komatsu, his indecisiveness is definitely his greatest problem. Even worse is that Kyosuke knows it.

## KASUGA MANAMI



The wise one of the twins, Manami is the quiet, responsible daughter with a slight streak of whims and wild. She is almost the lady of the house, doing all the cooking and most of the housekeeping. She possesses a very healthy dose of common sense and is quite practical. She's gifted with the ESP power of telekinesis to a very high degree, like her twin sister Kurumi.

## KASUGA KURUMI



The wild one of the twins, her whims dictate her actions and her passion is her constant guide. Probably the most skilled in the ESP power of telekinesis, Kurumi is a bit reckless and has little thought for the consequences and implications of her actions. In a sense, she is very much the youngest daughter: impulsive with a short (very short) temper.

## KASUGA TAKASHI



The father of the family. He is the only one who does not possess any ESP powers. He "fell" into the family when he fell in love with his future wife while on a solo photo excursion in the mountains. A professional photographer, Takashi Kasuga is the typical father figure who means well and is concerned with keeping the family's powers a secret.

## KASUGA KAZUYA



The young cousin of Kyosuke, this character appears later in the series (episode 24). Kazuya is the spitting (younger) image of Kyosuke, but this is where the comparison stops. Brat, twit, pest... make your choice: all these unfavorable adjectives fit him like a glove. Yet, Kazuya is a catalyst in the series and his own ESP powers make for a great plot device.

## HIYAMA HIKARU



In Hikaru shines truth. She is totally extroverted and hyper sensitive: she always means what she says and does, sometimes even to the point of annoyance. She has been Madoka's best friend for a long time and like her was a "tough bad girl" until she witnesses Kyosuke perform a "power" stunt. Generous, kind-hearted and unabashedly open with her feelings, Hikaru is the truest character of the series and is head-over-heels in love with Kyosuke. After that accidental kiss, she tries to win his heart for good though she knows that the drama is unfolding right in front of her eyes. Love is blind and never has it been more so than through Hikaru's eyes.

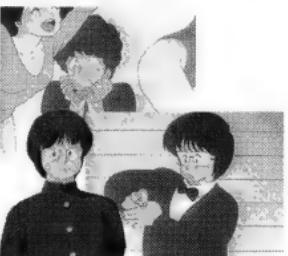
## AYUKAWA MADOKA



The mysterious and beautiful Madoka, a.k.a. "The Pick". She is the beautiful lonely girl that every one wishes either for friend or girlfriend. Yet, she also possesses tremendous skills as a "tough bad girl": her combat skills are without match.

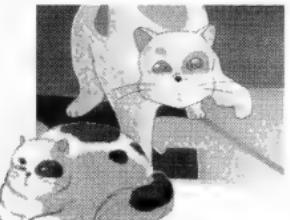
- She is an accomplished sportswoman and a great musician. The sax is her instrument of choice. Madoka loves Kyosuke, but knows Hikaru also does. Hikaru is a not just a childhood friend, she is a younger sister, someone she has cared for a long time. Madoka is the mystery that Kyosuke must solve... and that Madoka must also solve: behind seemingly unbreakable walls lies the sensitive personality that is her true self.

## HATTA KAZUYA and KOMATSU MASASHI



The friendly neighborhood classmates and forever companions of Kyosuke. Both are hormonally biased towards the female sex, and have been smitten by the beautiful twin sisters of Kyosuke. Note the famous Hatta nosebleed if you can. Every opportunity to explore the other sex is covered by these two. If you ever wished for true friends, they would not be your first choice. They are nonetheless hilarious in their attempts to gain female favors and in their continuous stunts that put Kyosuke in trouble.

## JINGORO



The cat. At least that is what the series pretends this comical monster is. This lovely animal belongs to the Kasuga family circle. He wishes he could escape some of Kurumi's more motherly instincts: his efforts to go get some fresh air are always frustrated; and he does NOT like cosmetics.

## MASTER



The perceptive and understanding owner of the pub-café ABCD. We never learn his real name, except that he is "Master"... and the title suits him well. He reads the young people like a book, and often offers indirect hints and insights on what is happening to our trio of youths caught in love's triangle. Master is the mentor figure for the main characters as they travel the often confusing road of youth-hood.

## HINO YUHSAKU



- The old childhood chum of Madoka and Hikaru. Yuhsaku is a karate expert who is desperately enamored with Hikaru... but cannot express it! Yuhsaku is often jealous to the point of rage as he witnesses the unfolding of the love triangle, and the constant attention that is borne upon Kyosuke by Hikaru.

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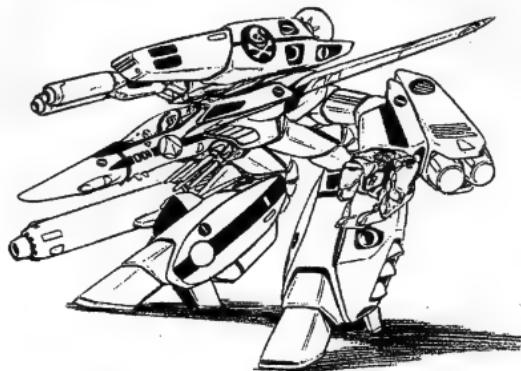
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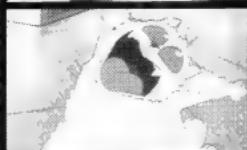
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# SPOTLIGHT

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## WHIMSICAL EPISODE GUIDE

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by Alain Dubreuil

- You will find here a short synopsis of the first twelve episodes. The intent is to give you a taste of this fine series. We'd like to thank the VANCOUVER ANIMATION CLUB for their work which made this article possible.

### EPISODE 1

#### Transfer Student Humbly First Love

- Kyosuke Kasuga is from a family of ESPers recently arrived in town after a long sequence of problems caused by his family's use of powers in the seven previous places they called home. He meets with Madoka Ayukawa at the top of a long outdoor staircase after catching her flying red hat. They have a short dispute over the number of stairs (99 or 100). Kyosuke compromises at 99 and a half! Madoka, laughing and smiling, leaves giving him the hat (holy red hat). We meet his twin sisters, Manami and Kurumi, his father, a freelance photographer, and the house cat, Jingoro, who seems to be flying by Kurumi's whim and telekinetic power.

- First day at school, Kyosuke encounters Hikaru after her "motorcycle incident". In class, Kyosuke is boarded by the Dumb Duo, Hatta and Komatsu, who reveal the school's great charm: Hatta nosebleed 1.

- Kyosuke also realizes that Madoka will be in his classroom.
- Late after school, Kyosuke witnesses Madoka in a brawl caused by Hikaru: this is when he learns of "The Pick" side of Madoka. When the fight is over he reproaches her her smoking. "You won't have healthy babies!": Madoka slap 1. The show ends with Madoka and Kyosuke in their own introspections, Kyosuke on his bed and Madoka in one of her famous sex (not sex) sequences.

### EPISODE 2

- A Bit of a Lemon Kiss to that Girl
- Kyosuke awakens after a romantic dream about Ayukawa where she declares her love for him. He then sees Madoka performing a fantastic gym routine and applauds her, getting everyone's attention. She's cold with him except when they are alone. After an impressive basketball "power" stunt, Hikaru — a young friend of Madoka — falls in love with Kyosuke. The love triangle is set. Later, Hikaru and Kyosuke bump in each other, accidentally kissing while Madoka witnesses the scene. All this while there is a food rampage over the elusive KATSU-SAND (curler sandwich), cause of injuries and war on this planet (well, at least in KOR). Hikaru declares her love while Kyosuke has to answer to the gym teacher's accusations of debauchery! The episode ends on Kyosuke's flashback of Hikaru and him kissing, while he fights Jingoro over Madoka's red straw hat. A long hesitation period begins for Kyosuke, Mr. Indecision himself.

### EPISODE 3

- Mood Swings! Rolling First Date!
- Hatta and Komatsu, Kyosuke's classmates and friends(?), have a crush

on his twin sisters. They invite the sisters to the Mobius disco. Kurumi steps out, accepting the free ticket—but not the invitation! Kyosuke and Manami, unknowing, teleport to save Kurumi from the clutches of the Hormonal Duo. Inside, Kyosuke spots Madoka and dreams of cheek time with her, but ends up dancing with Hikaru while Ayukawa looks on with angry eyes. A date is set between Hikaru and Kyosuke for the next day. While waiting, Kyosuke meets with Madoka, rides a boat with her, saves a drowning child, drinks a cup of coffee and...remembers of the date with Hikaru loudly as Madoka mentions that their chance meeting looks like a date! Madoka leaves, giving him the cold shoulder. Kyosuke rushes under the cold rain to meet Hikaru. He arrives too late: all he manages to pick up is a "BAKA" notice.

## EPISODE 4

Hikaru-chan??

Panic C Experience

Kyosuke has a cold. Hikaru comes to see him to apologize for insulting him, crying for forgiveness. She then notices his sickness and they spend the night together...listening to music. Next morning, the whole school—with the help of Kurumi—is talking about the wild rumor: Kyosuke and Hikaru went C(A: hold hands, B: kiss, C: sex)! Komatsu is quite interested about how it happened and what it feels like to be a man. Kyosuke shouts in class that it's false. He didn't do C with Hikaru. Only one person rises, behind him, and leaves the class: Madoka!

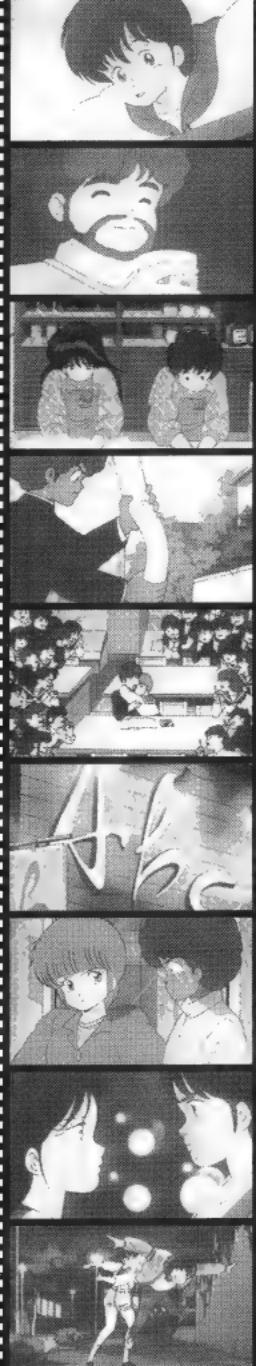
Kyosuke tries to convince Hikaru to help defuse the rumor, but all he gets is an engagement, an embarrassment, and a faint. Lying in the

- infirmary, he dreams of hugging Madoka, but ends up hugging Hikaru... in front of Madoka. Later, on the roof, Madoka and Hikaru talk about Kyosuke and the rumor: after agreeing on the facts, Madoka promises she will help Hikaru "get her man"...as much as possible, but asks herself "Why did he have to lie?" about their chance meeting in the park.
- Kyosuke, crawling from his bed, calls Madoka to explain himself. She does not like excuses. He later realizes that Hikaru and Madoka are long-time friends. Next day in the evening, Madoka and Kyosuke meet in a "bulldozer incident", and they end up on an overpass sharing a sacred moment of intimate silence.

## EPISODE 5

Two's Secret Part-Time Trouble

- It's a holiday! Kyosuke stays home while the family goes to Hokkaido.
- He talks to Hikaru, who is also about to leave for the weekend: she has seen Madoka with an older man going into a hotel. Kyosuke follows Madoka and finds out that she's working part-time at ABCB, a restaurant-café. The older man happens to be her boss, Master, and there is no scandal after all. Kyosuke stays to help. Since Junior High students are not supposed to work, Master says that Kyosuke will thus be guilty of the same crime. They work together through the weekend. Madoka tells Kyosuke that he is a bad boy for flirting with two girls at the same time and asks if he's serious about Hikaru.
- Late at night, while they wait for the bus, she asks if she can spend the night at his place. Hikaru arrives and "saves the day". Kyosuke ponders on the moment and Ayukawa's words.



# SPOTLIGHT



## EPISODE 6

- He's the Rival.
- Love's Mid-Term Exam

The mid-terms are near. Madoka asks Kyosuke if he wants to study with her while Hikaru asks Kyosuke to tutor her (she's younger by two years). Kyosuke tries to balance everything, teleporting from one to the other. Enter Yuhsaku, a childhood friend of Hikaru who possesses tremendous karate skills. He wants to get Hikaru back from Kyosuke... though he has not told her that he loves her. He is rough on Kyosuke: spying on him, he somewhat witnesses Kyosuke's "touch-and-go" from Hikaru to Madoka, then accusing him of playing with hearts. Kyosuke sees Yuhsaku talking with Madoka. Kyosuke is filled with jealousy — and fear of Yuhsaku telling on him, but ends up relieved learning through Madoka that his target is Hikaru: for once, Kyosuke says aloud to Madoka the right thing at the right time. Everything ends up with Madoka unhappy with Kyosuke's poor results after such intensive studying.

## EPISODE 7

- Madoka's Private Life!
- Kiss sparks Color!

Yuhsaku and Hikaru go for a walk while Kyosuke keeps thinking about Madoka's "Can I stay at your place?" and wanders in front of her home. As he arrives, she gets out and they walk together. The two couples end up walking around the same fountain without seeing each other. Madoka and Kyosuke are parted for a moment, but he runs back to her, symbolic of the whole series. They end up in a bar. Drunk, Kyosuke tries to kiss Madoka: slap no 2.

- Next day at school, Madoka wants to talk to him, but the katsu-sand war and Hikaru divert his attention until a providential UFO (!) permits him to run free to talk to Madoka. He gives her a peace offering (an elusive katsu-sand) and tries to explain his behavior of the previous day. Tender Madoka forgives and forgets.

## EPISODE 8

- You're the Smile. Shutter Chance at the Beach!

Kyosuke's father is working at home on a swimsuit issue and is auditioning models... with Kyosuke drooling all over the place. Hikaru has been scouted by a photographer. Yuhsaku and Kyosuke are worried that her virtue may be endangered, convincing Madoka to chaperon Hikaru. The day of the shoot, they learn that the photographer is Kyosuke's father. Everyone ends up at the beach where pictures of Hikaru and the twins (Hatta and Komatsu going nuts!) are taken.

- Ayukawa is about to leave — since she's being ignored and, anyway, everything is fine — but father asks son if he could take a few shots of Madoka. Kyosuke runs after her and clearly (a rare fear) asks her to model. She accepts commenting, with tender eyes, that Kyosuke is a spoiled child. The episode finishes the next day when Kyosuke hands our a picture to Madoka, but he mixed them up and gives her a nice shot of Hikaru and him. Is she ever happy!?

## EPISODE 9

- Kurumi-chan's How to Date

- Kurumi uses her power to clean the house. A guy "kidnaps" her a while later when the two sisters and brother

are out shopping. Her power being drained, they are worried for her. Madoka takes the situation in hand, asking friends to search for her. Kyosuke and Madoka go on one side, while Hikaru and Yuhsaku go on their own. Kyosuke and Madoka end up at "Lovers' Forest". Kyosuke is having weird thoughts as he looks about. They are kicked out by a policeman who suggests that they do want to be here! Kyosuke sees Madoka embarrassed for the first time as she drags him away. Finally, Kurumi gets her power back and the kidnapper is flown sky high. He is recognized: it's Komatsu's brother. An injured Yuhsaku is happily being taken care of by Hikaru until Kyosuke arrives, which further deteriorates the two guys' relationship.

EPISODE 10

## **EPISODE 10**

### **Premonition Dream? Hikaru-chan Will Die?**

Kyosuke has a terrible dream in which Hikaru is dying. A premonition dream? Kyosuke is worried. Everything she does at school is treated as a sign of illness by Kyosuke. Hikaru finds out that being sick will get her Kyosuke's attention thus... She's SOOOO sick! Yuhsaku and Kyosuke gather at her deathbed, and Yuhsaku grants her dying wish - making him a hero: let me spend these moments with Kyosuke. Madoka happens upon the scene later and explains everything to Yuhsaku. The tragic couple ends up drenched by Yuhsaku and an approving Madoka, both bearing a mocking smile.

EPISODE 11

#### **Wedding Bells Don't Ring!**

A nice remake of "The Graduate". Madoka has not been around for

three days in a row. She's seen with an older man. Kyosuke imagines her in a wedding dress after a very strong telepathic attempt to read her mind. Kyosuke makes up his mind: he will not lose her. He arrives at ABCB dressed up to the nines, provoking smiles and giggles from Master and Madoka. Suddenly, Madoka slips away with the "other man"! Kyosuke, alone, does not know what to do. Master gives him the answer: "I knew I had to tell her". The bike race is on and the bells must NOT ring. Flashback scenes of "The Graduate". We realize that Madoka's sister is getting married and that she's helping with the wedding rehearsal in her place. All ends in a picture of the future.

EPISODE 12

► To America!

### Good-bye Marloka!

Madoka's world-famous violinist parents are moving to the USA. Madoka will follow them there. Kyosuke and Hikaru are terribly shocked by the news. Madoka seems to be sad and we see her playing the sax several times, while Kyosuke can only think about her. A good-bye party is set at ABCB. Master tells Madoka that her relation with Kyosuke should not get in the way of her decision. Madoka is not at the party. Kyosuke finds her at the top of "their" staircase. Kyosuke tells her that he's happy since he moved to this city, mostly since he came to the top of the staircase, counting the steps. She tells him that she never intended to leave. Yet, next day at the airport, Kyosuke wonders. ☺



(to be continued in PA #23)

# LIGHTS, CAMERA, SETTINGS!

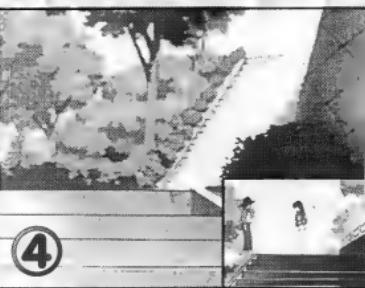
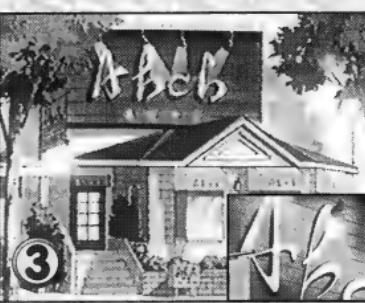
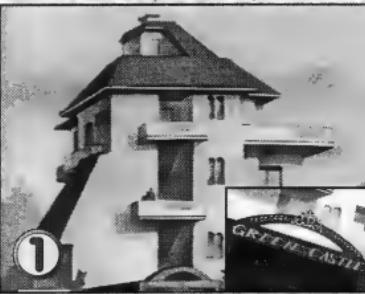
by Alain Dubreuil  
& Patrick Lapointe

To envision the world of **KIMAGURE ORANGE ROAD (KOR)**, it takes but a few imaginative steps. The physical setting is quite common and has in fact very few cultural differences or built-in exotics. KOR's city is like the average large Japanese city. It is not Tokyo or a megalopolis, but it provides all the services necessary as well as a healthy night life. The Mobius Disco, where he cannot say no to Hikaru, and other lively places simply seem to bring more pain than pleasure to Kyosuke.

**1** The Kasuga have chosen as their home a large apartment in the Green Castle building. It is a typical occidental — i.e. quite spacy — 5 or 6 rooms (and a half) apartment. In the same building live the characters Umao and Ushiko, a dream-like couple who have multiple cameos throughout the series. Later, cousin Kazuya and his family will also move in the same building, insuring constant trouble for Kyosuke. Kyosuke has his own room, with his bed "catching" the spotlight in the series: it's Kyosuke's favored spot, either as a place where "things" happen, or as a reflective/meditative hideout for his introspections. In effect, the bedroom is very much his castle and safe haven. A typical teenager!

**2** The driving premise and guardian of the series timeline is the school. As the story evolves, it does so along the school-year calendar. Kyosuke's classroom, 3-A, sees a lot of action but little interaction. In room 3-A, there are two solitudes — Madoka and Kyosuke, and two stimulus elements, a.k.a. Hatta and Komatsu. Many stories have their beginnings in this setting. On the other hand, Hikaru shares a seventh grade class with Kyosuke's twin sisters, while Yuhsaku is alone (as usual) in his own classroom. The school corridors are the secret meanders where Kyosuke and Madoka meet and interact. Strangely, they become a dangerous place, where Kyosuke watches out for the gentle yet excitable creature known as Hikaru. Further, the corridors lead not to Rome, but to the theater of war, the cafeteria. Kyosuke is often shanghaied into the invigorating "katsu-sand" conflict by Hatta and Komatsu, leaving behind either Hikaru or Madoka. Then, the "katsu-sand" conflict, a true struggle for food and life, begins in earnest. Other locales worthy of mention are the stairs leading to the rooftop and the rooftop itself. The stairs of the school are used as a parallel to the outside staircase where met Kyosuke and Madoka. These places — combined — are the stage for important conversations and events.

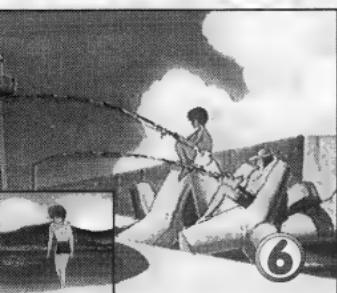
Note that the school is also the officious set and stage for Komatsu Productions' two groundbreaking movie videos:



# SPOTLIGHT



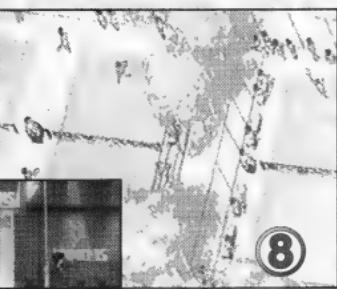
- T.A.P. GUN and a long-winded title movie in constant flux whose title we will not bother naming (so as not to shame the director).



- ③ From school the way leads down Orange Road to the ultimate gathering point for all the characters: ABCB. The café-restaurant, owned and operated by Master, is where Madoka works part-time and where the other characters suddenly find themselves as the series advance. It is the official hangout for the group. It is also a place of teaching — Master's advice is often eloquent and relevant — a place of rejoicing, and also a place that is special to both Madoka and Kyosuke. ABCB is their public excuse to be together without bringing the public eye to bear upon them. The best place to hide is often in plain view...



- ④ Now take a few steps with us, and let us find the staircase leading to the park: the place where it all started (again). It is where Kyosuke and Madoka first met, and where they have their moments truly alone. Of interest is the "disagreement" over the number of steps between Kyosuke and Madoka: 99 or 100. It is resolved by Kyosuke's "99 and a half" (Does that remind anyone of something? Like 99 and a half steps to your heart?). The staircase is also the place where Madoka's red hat is exchanged, which serves as the physical link between Madoka and Kyosuke.



- ⑤ The physical setting also reveals Madoka's other side: "The Pick". Street gangs are often pictured during the series - humorously and not so humorously. From the tough boys to the biker girls, they represent living elements of the series, reveal-

- ing Madoka's past and charting her changes throughout the series. They are also opportunities to demonstrate Madoka's great physical, martial and acrobatic skills. These places and people are where Madoka "swims" easily, often leaving Kyosuke behind sad and/or confused.

- ⑥ In the series, marking the summer holiday, the beach is nicely highlighted over two episodes (number 18 and 19). The core of the group is firmly established then and there: Madoka, Hikaru, Kyosuke... and Yuhsaku. Of even greater importance during this "summer vacation" is the island where Madoka and Kyosuke find themselves stranded. It is not only a paradise, but they are effectively alone to be as they truly are: teenagers. The island is a turning point in the series for both Kyosuke and even more so for Madoka.

- ⑦ Finally the series borrows a lot to create special events. The Godzilla pastiche, T.A.P. GUN, is a beautiful episode in itself. More important are the scenes lifted from movies such as "The Graduate" and "To Love Somebody". Songs and themes are also borrowed efficiently and are not just grand thefts, but also further the story.

- ⑧ There are other places and people in KOR: the Mobius Disco, tennis camp, Sumire-chan, Kumiko Oda, etc., but we will let you discover them, and the whole story of KIMAGURE ORANGE ROAD by yourself.

- Subtitled versions of the series are available through Arctic Animation, while the OAVs and movie are commercially available through ANIMEIGO (P.O. Box 989, Wilmington NC, 28402-989 USA). ☺

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Creator of *Outlanders* and *Caravan Kidd*

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# TO BODILY GO... TO TOKYO

by Sylvain Rheault

How many of you, faithful readers of PA have ever dreamed about going to Japan, in that far-away land where people read comics by millions and do enjoy the taste of raw fish? Well, I'm here, like a good fairy, to tell you that it is possible even if you have no money at all. Well, what I really want to say is that you can borrow some money that you will be able to repay easily later. I just spent one year in Japan, working as teacher and learning Japanese, and still I wonder why I came back.

Because the flight is unbearably long, it is highly suggested to spend at least one full month in Japan. By the time you recover from the jet-lag, a week will be gone. Travelling in Japan is pretty expensive. Even a stingy tourist lodging in the

- cheapest hotel and eating teh cheapest, can expect to pay at least 150,000 yen (CANS\$1500!!!) for one month, unless you have a Japanese friend or don't mind sleeping with the hobos in Ueno Park or don't need to eat at all. In any case, short term stays are financially disastrous, and your most lasting souvenir will probably be the unbelievable rate at which you spend your money. Your eyes will be flickering at all those 0s in the prices, and you will start to believe that 10,000 yen bills do have wings.
- So, let's talk about spending at least six months in Japan. In order to do so, you must decide if you want to learn Japanese or not. If you have the guts to ingest all those kanjis, then the student visa will be the best solution. You will then have

- to attend at least 20 hours of Japanese lessons per week, which is great, and will allow you to work 20 hours in order to decently survive. There are many Japanese language schools in Japan, and most of them can sponsor you for a visa.
- Just in case, here is the address of one of the best: Kai Japanese, Miyuki Building, 3F 1-15-18, Okubo, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 160, Japan, Tel (03) 3205-1356. Also, you can look for a homestay family, but depending on your luck, you will probably have to follow some elementary rules, like being at home before eleven, going with the family to visit some relatives, etc.
- If you don't really want to learn Japanese, but have some special abilities in teaching, you can join the JET Program. In order to improve the teaching of English in Japan, the Ministry of Education hires English-speaking foreigners that will help the local teachers animate conversation. Teh money is good, but so is the schedule: you may find yourself working all the time instead of learning Japanese or going out. Also, your employer will have the final word about the area you will be sent to. Ask your nearest Japanese embassy or consulate if you are interested in such a program.
- Finally, for the adventurous ones, you can simply go to Japan with a tourist visa and look for work on the spot. Check in the Monday edition of the Japan Times for potential jobs. Due to a special agreement with Japan, Australian, Canadian and New Zealand citizens (less than 30 years old) can find work (20 hours per week) without the need for sponsorship. Otherwise, you will have to find work AND sponsorship in order to get a proper working visa. If you do not speak Japanese, don't expect anything out of the teaching and computer programming fields.

## LIFE IN THE CITY

If you really want to learn Japanese and want to feel the true spirit of Japan, you may choose the countryside. But many gaijins soon get bored and prefer to go back to the excitement of the city. If you are looking for normal entertainment, like bars, shops and movie theaters, Shibuya is for you. If you want to meet



someone, boy or girl, who wants to meet a foreigner, then head on for Roppongi's discos and bars. It might be delicate to elaborate on that matter, and I'm sure that any gaijin you'll meet in Tokyo will gladly guide you to the interesting spots. About the Red Light districts, I assume that you will find that by yourself.

If you are fond of exotic food, the little Indiana Jones in you will not be disappointed. Go straight to an izakaya (a Japanese tavern), ask for a big beer (jöki) and point everything with funny shapes or colors on the illustrated menu. Boy, when you'll tell your friends that you had dried squid tentacles, fish bones, or raw sea-urchin, they simply won't believe you! For the skeptics, bring the camera and zoom in on the food in your mouth: gross but irrefutable.

For those who may show even insignificant symptoms of claustrophobia, beware! The trains will be a death trap for you. It seriously takes about two months before starting to get used to the crowd. Never try to push or get angry, just move with the mass and be extremely patient. Yes, you still wonder how this little old lady can be so brazenly rough while getting out of the wagon. Yes, you will understand why the secret dream of some people is to get rid of everybody with a machine-gun.

Also, for the common gaijin, the language barrier might be very frustrating sometime. Never shout, repeat slowly, patiently, or try to speak English with a Japanese accent. Remember that you are trying to communicate for your own good.

## FOR THE ANIME FANS

If you think of Japan as the land of animation the same way as of Disneyland being the land of fantasy, you're wrong. Anime are not everywhere. First, if you want to watch one of the forty or more new animation series on TV, be sure to find a TV guide that you can read. Of course, there is always a special "Anime" section in any TV guides or Anime magazines (*Animage*, *New Type*), but these are for kanji kings. If you not part of this select dynasty, the Japan



- Times or the Daily Yomiuri feature a convenient TV schedule. Second, if you want to find any original tapes or laser disks, you'd better go directly to Akihabara, two stops north of Tokyo station, known by every foreigner as the paradise of electronics. The average video shop will display their merchandise on three floors, and be sure you won't have to go to the bathroom for the next four hours if you want to check everything. By the way, having to use the honorable and traditional basin that you will find in the restroom is a little nightmare of its own, trust me.

## FOR THE MANGA FANS

- Compared to original tapes or laser disks, comics in Japan are much more affordable, and you get so much for your money! Imagine, 400 pages of action for only 220 yens. Of course the problem is reading them, an obstacle you can easily overcome after only two years of intensive study. Or perhaps, you might just be looking for animation related books, full of pictures, blue prints and sketches. In any case, "MANGA NO MORI" (Manga Forest, the sign is in Japanese) near the southern exit of Shinjuku station will probably overfeed your most insane expectation. Be prepared for the shock.

- Also located in the same area is "KINOKUNIYA", six floors packed, literally, with any kind of books. It is nigh impossible to not find what you are looking for. You may even find books you were not even daring to imagine. Just say "KINOKUNIYA" to anyone near Shinjuku station and follow the finger.

## FOR THE MODEL FANS

- Of course, any big department store will have its load of Gundam and friends, but if you want to deal with professionals, head for Shibuya, stop by the police box and ask for "B CLUB" for the official Bandai store. But I personally recommend the showroom of the garage kit enterprises, like "KAIYODO", in Shibuya again, and the impressive "VOLKS", a twenty minute walk from Kichijoji. All those terrific dioramas you can see in the magazines are there, and you can meet and talk (I mean, in Japanese) with people sharing the same interest as you.
- If you feel that a potential gaijin is pulsating in you, let it be and go east, far east. Go to Japan and "waste": one year of your precious youth there. I wish you a good trip and hope to meet you again, if you ever get back, and don't blame me if you fall in love with Japan. ☺



## ALADDIN FROM THE EAST TO THE WEST

by Claude J. Pelletier

### DISNEY'S ALADDIN VERSION

There are a lot of non-Japanese animations actually on the market and some are very good: BEAUTY AND THE BEAST, FERN GULLY, ALADDIN, just to name a few. This abundance in quality will make the animation more popular than ever and will also be beneficial for the anime popularity.

At first glance, the last Walt Disney animation, ALADDIN is quite perfect. The quality of the drawings and animation is amazing: bright colors, great flow in the movement, nice character designs, and even some computer animation. The music and songs are a pleasant support to the pace of the story which is a tale taken (and adapted) from the THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS. It is a beautiful fantasy, very inventive and with a great sense of humor that is often biting.

Aladdin is poor and steals in the market to feed himself and some other poor children he knows. He dreams of wealth. Then he meets Jasmine, the princess that has escaped her father's castle because she is tired of the ceremonials that made of her a captive in a golden cage and because the law dictates that she must get married before her majority, but only to a prince. She doesn't like any prince because they are always full of their own importance, but if she doesn't choose one within three days she will be married to the vizier Jafar, a cruel, ambitious and evil sorcerer. Jafar uses Aladdin to find a magic lamp, but the young thief escapes with it and releases a genie who grants him three wishes. Having fallen in love with Jasmine during their short encounter, Aladdin asks the genie to make him a prince so he could marry the princess. Of course, Jafar finds the lamp, kidnaps Jasmine and tries to kill Aladdin. But it is a Disney animation, so it will end well, after a lot of bouncing and with a little moral: you can do anything if you really want it.

It is probably the best Disney animation and may even exceed the success of BEAUTY AND THE BEAST. Most amazingly it rectifies most of the grievances that I have held against Disney in the past. There are direct references to a non-American culture (Arabs - though it is still used sometimes with a taste of parody), non-white characters (though they are a little pale for Arabs), and even some specific references to our own time (the genie takes the shape of Arsenio Hall, Jack Nicholson, Ed Sullivan, etc.). Even if it does not respect the original story, it keeps its spirit and brings a lot of original ideas particularly by creating new characters with a strong personality (like Lago, Jafar's parrot and the flying carpet which can, by the magic of computer animation, mimic several human feelings). The best innovation is without doubt the choice of Robin Williams as the genie's voice and the fact that, by his improvisation, he gave him a very rich and expressive personality, almost stealing the lead from Aladdin. Even better is the fact that the animators have been able to follow Williams in his improvisations and make the genie take the shape of the various personalities that Williams was imitating, in a very fluid animation. Bravo!



## JAPANESE'S ALADDIN VERSION

I really thought that *ALADDIN* was quite original until I saw the version the Japanese made in 1982, *ALADDIN AND THE MAGIC LAMP*. That movie is very close to the original story and display ten years before Disney, several aspects that I found original in *ALADDIN*. Is it plagiarism? Or simply a strange coincidence? That is what we will try to determine. (By the way, this movie has some likenesses with Bakshi's *LORD OF THE RINGS*, it may just be a feeling, but the magician looks a little like Gandalf...).

Aladdin is poor and is hanging around all day with his street gang, stealing food, returning home only to take his meal. His mother laments that her son has not found himself a good job to help her buying food. She is spinning cotton to feed her family. One day, a magician from Morocco offers money to Aladdin for his help. They go to the desert and the magician chants an incantation at the feet of an eagle-shaped mountain. The claw of the beast opens, revealing a door. Aladdin just has to go down in the cave and bring back a lamp. The magician gives him a ring for his protection. Aladdin finds the lamp, but also a tree with a strange glass fruit that he plucks. Back at the entry, he is too heavy to climb up the hole and asks the magician to haul him up. "Give me the lamp first," ask the magician. Aladdin refuses and the magician, losing his patience, closes the hole and goes away, leaving Aladdin trapped. Aladdin fortuitously rubs the ring, freeing the genie of the ring that who frees him in turn. Aladdin finds himself a pet, a desert mouse. Back home, he finds his mother hungry and with no money. He decides that he will sell the lamp and frees the genie while cleaning it. The genie is a real giant that scares the mother. Aladdin asks for food and the genie brings a king's feast. They live a couple of days on the left-overs and after that Aladdin goes to the market to sell one the silver pitters that contained the food. There, he meets the princess. He falls in love and asks her mother to go ask her hand to the sultan, bringing as a present the strange glass fruit that is in fact a precious jewel. The sultan accepts, they are married, and Aladdin uses the genie to build a palace, overnight for the princess. But the Moorish magician discovers that Aladdin is alive and that he got the lamp. He steals the lamp by trickery and uses the genie to bring the palace and the princess in Morocco. The sultan accuse Aladdin, who asks for three days to find the princess. The genie of the ring cannot undo what is done by the genie of the lamp but he can bring Aladdin to Morocco. There, Aladdin and the princess make a plan to steal back the lamp. They are chased by the magician, but finally he and his castle are destroyed (by the sand mouse!). Back home, Aladdin and the princess hide the lamp in a chest and live happily ever after. Few

There are a lot of differences with Disney's story. It is a more classical, more serious story where the genie, far from being funny, can grant unlimited wishes and is not freed at the end. Disney has avoided any reference to the genie of the ring, probably to keep the story simple and to avoid any confusion. But the main differences are details and we are more interested in the likenesses between the two stories. First, the magician has a pet bird. It is a crow, not a parrot, but there is someone in the market who has a parrot like Jafar's. In Disney, the cave is also hidden under an animal-shaped mountain but it's a lion's head instead of an eagle. Aladdin has also a pet animal, but it is a little monkey. In the Japanese version, the magician is using a flying carpet, but it does not have any personality. And in both movies, the Khalif is a short, fat man with a very caricatural design. There are several almost-alike scenes between the two movies. Too many to be coincidental. Sometimes it is just a feeling. Was Disney inspired by the Japanese movie? Or did both movies have the same inspiration? The original story?



# ANIME STORIES

## THE ORIGINAL STORY

As you probably know, "Aladdin and the Enchanted Lamp" is part of the THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS (*Al Lailah wa Laila*). It is a compilation of Indian, Persian and Arab folklore. Part of its stories came from a persian book, *Hazar Aisanah* (A Thousand Legends), translated in Arabic around 850 A.D. while another part were compiled by an unknown author living probably in the 13th century in one of the main cities of the silk road (China), a perfect crossroad to learn about the folklore of all Eastern civilizations. The ARABIAN NIGHTS are very different from the usual scientific or religious arab literature that we know; it is written in a vulgar language, telling fabulous stories with risqué details. Those are stories of the people, very useful to learn about their time. They were rather neglected until the eighteenth century time when the Arabic manuscript took its final form, probably in Egypt. The first Arabic edition appeared in Calcutta (1814) and Macnaghten ed. (1839-42) and in Cairo (Boulaq ed. 1835). The first translations were made in French by A. Galland (1704-1717), and in English by E.W. Lane (1839-1841). Until recently, there was no really serious edition, several editor using manuscripts of doubtful origin or adding stories from other books simply to make the count of the "nights" closer to a thousand (though in Arab "thousand and one" simply means "many"). There are several manuscripts and most of them are not alike. ALADDIN's story was not originally part of the corpus, as it was the case also for the SIMBAD and ALI Baba stories. They were introduced in a short form in some manuscripts by Arab copyists of the 17th and 18th century, and were definitely included in the ARABIAN NIGHTS by Galland.

In the original story, Aladdin is a very bad boy. He is a "headstrong and incorrigible good-for-nothing", spending all day in the parks and gardens with little ruffians of his own age. Disappointed by his son, who would not learn from him the trade of a tailor, his father "fell into an illness and died". The moonsh sorcerer comes to Aladdin telling him he is his uncle. He takes care of him and his mother, and finally asks for help to retrieve the lamp. Everything happens like in the Japanese movie, save that the cave entrance is covered only by a slab. Back in the city, he spends a lot of time in the market and learns the trade of goldsmith and jeweler. Having seen the princess Badr-al-Budur in the city bath, he wants to marry her. This part is much longer than in the movie. His mother goes three times to see the sultan, but Aladdin's request find a great opposition with the vizier, the princess having been already promised to his son. But Aladdin finally marries her, and spends a lot of time in the court, building a palace for the princess, being generous to the people, even leading the sultan's army, until the Moonsh sorcerer comes back and steals the palace and the princess. Aladdin is granted a delay of forty days, goes to Morocco and poisons the sorcerer with the help of the princess. Back in his city, he has some problems with the sorcerer's brother, who seeks vengeance, but he finally stabs him to the heart and "he lives happily with Badr-al-Budur until they are visited by the Destroyer of all earthly pleasures, the Annihilator of men" (until they die).

The 1982 Japanese animation is, as I said, very close to this story, save that the original story contains several adventures that were probably kept out of the movie to avoid length. There is an other Aladdin story, "The Wise Persian", that could be found in some manuscripts (it was ignored by the Boulaq edition, and by Galland, but can be found in two manuscripts at the National Library of France, one being a copy of a rare complete manuscript of the 18th century). This story has some similarities with the main one: Aladdin is a caterer and has a great reputation for his beauty. The princess Moon-of-moons, also quite known for her exquisite beauty, tries to see him to check if his reputation is true. They fall in love, but can't see each other. Aladdin being only a caterer. A wise man from Persia offers to Aladdin to use his great magic to allow the couple to meet every night. She gets pregnant and must tell the truth to the khalif who wants Aladdin's head. Again the Persian magic (in a very long story) convinces the sultan not to do so. What is interesting is that the vizier is called... Dja Far.

After having checked the original stories we can tell that it contains no pet bird for the magician, no animal-shaped mountain (just a plain hole in the ground), no pet animal for Aladdin, no flying carpet. If both movies have a common inspiration it could be another movie, older than the Japanese adaptabtion. There were so many movies or books inspired by that story. I have seen none of them so I can't tell. But the Disney movie still looks suspicious to me. Also, I have said that the only original part I have found in Disney's ALADDIN is the use of Robin Williams, but in fact the Australian movie FERNGULLY already used his great talent to characterize its colorful Bat. Nevertheless Disney's ALADDIN is still a hell of an entertainment and I warmly recommanding it to you. Take also this opportunity opportunity to see the 1982 Japanese version, ALADDIN AND THE MAGIC LAMP, and to read the original story. It is really worth it. ☺



In its series SING ALONG SONGS, Walt Disney Home Video released Vol. 11 "Friend Like Me", featuring two songs from ALADDIN: "Friend Like Me"

and "A Whole New World", both having been Best Song nominees at the 1992 Academy Award. This 27-minute video also feature a delightful assortment of nine songs from Disney's THE LITTLE MERMAID (series), THE JUNGLE BOOK, BEAUTY AND THE BEAST, THE FOX AND THE HOUND, SONG OF THE SOUTH, THE PARENT TRAP... Sing along to the on-screen lyrics and join your favorite characters in some memorable musical moment from Disney animated and live-action films. \$12.99 US / \$14.95 CAN.

## MEDIAGRAPHY

• **ALADDIN:** USA. 1992. Movie by John Musker & Ron Clement (they also made THE LITTLE MERMAID in 1989). Script: J. Musker & R. Clement, Ted Elliott, Terry Rossio; <montages>: H. Lee Peterson; Music: Alan Menken. Producer: Disney Productions. 90 min.



• **ALADDIN AND THE MAGIC LAMP:** Japan. 1982. Directed by Yoshikatsu Kasai; Produced by Tomonori Imada; Planning: Yasuo Yamagishi; Production: Yoshiro Sugawara; Music: Katshiro Tsubono; Performed by: Tokyo Quintet/Columbia Quintet; Art direction: Humihiro Uchikawa; Animation dir./Character design: Shinya Tokashiki; A Toei Animation Co., production. English version produced by Mark Headley; directed by Ardwright Chamberlain; Written by Sandra Willard; Credits music: "Angel's Flight" by Chuck Greenberg, performed by ShadowFax; Dubbing by SYNC, Ltd. Distribution by Samuel Goldwyn Company. 90 min.



• **DAWOOD, N.J. Tales for the Thousand and One Nights:** Markham, Penguin Books, 1988. 406 p. His translation follows Macnaghten's Calcutta edition; ALADDIN follows Zotenberg's text (Paris, 1888).



• **KHAWAM, R.R. Les Mille et Une Nuits:** Vol. 1 and 4, Paris, Presse-Pocket (#3203, 3206), 1989. 311 p./312 p. I used the introduction of both volume and his "Le Sage persan" in vol. 4.

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# U.S. RENDITIONS: SUBS & DUBS

by Martin Ouellette

## GUNBUSTER VOL 1-2-3

Since there are three separated volumes of a rather different mood, we will review them separately.

Vol. 1: The cutest of the three. This is when Noriko meets Kazumi ("Rose Queen") Amano and Jung ("Busty") Freud. The training sessions are rather "realistic" (look for bouncing objects) and there's a bath scene that will make all true otaku blush to death with excitement. Color, Hi-Fi, 55 min., English subtitles, Car.#USR-VD1, \$34.95.

Vol. 2: The mood is darker in this one. A certain tension appears between the characters, especially Amano and Noriko. We also get to see the "GunBuster" in combat. Talk about Firepower! Vol. 2 is a slow buildup for the last battle in Vol. 3. Color, Hi-Fi Stereo, 60 min., English subtitles, Car.#USR-VD3, \$34.95.

Vol. 3: This one is quite simply one of the best OVA we've seen, even if you have missed Vol. 1-2. It is very dark and we see what kind of effect living in hyperspace can have on someone. The last episode is truly a masterpiece of music/action and is actually entirely in black and white. Fantastic! Color, Hi-Fi Stereo, 60 min., English subtitles, car.#USR-VD5, \$34.95.

Just as in their other subtitled products, U.S. Renditions did a very good job. The type is clear and big enough to be easily read and does not hide the picture too much. A well-done job for a truly amazing OVA.

## ICZER-ONE VOL 1-2

We're sure that a lot of people will be very happy to know that someone dubbed this OVA. "Iczer-One" has been extremely popular these last few years. Although it is a little old (1985/86) and the quality of the animation is only so-so, it's the story and characters that people find endearing. The story, which was originally written by Rei Aran, has been wonderfully adapted in animation by one of the overall best animation artists of Japan: Toshihiro Hirano (Megazone 23 pt.1, Dangai, Macross:the movie, Vampire Princess Miyu, etc). He also did the character designs and directed the OVA.

The mecha designs, by Hiroaki Moroig and Shinji Aramaki, are also a high point of this animation, Iczer-Robo in particular. The dubbing by U.S. Renditions is very well-done, but as with the first "Macross II" tapes (the second one is better), some of the voices don't fit. The voice of Nagisa Karlo was the one that we found the most misfitting of all (she sounds too mature), but we loved Iczer-one's. Quite a nice job. Color, Hi-Fi Stereo, 60/48 min.; English dubbed, Car.#USR-VD13 & USR-VD14, \$24.95 each.

## ORGUSS VOL 1-2

The second of Tatsunoko's "Super Dimensional" trio of SF animation, Orguss was also the weirdest. Although they are a little old, the designs are still interesting, especially the character by Haruyuki Mikimoto. It is a good series but we truly wonder why "U.S. Renditions" chose to dub this one in particular. The story is





- original (in fact original doesn't begin to describe how original it is), but not that exciting. We doubt that fans would have become crazed with grief if it had not been dubbed. The translation was very well done, but we cannot believe that "Differentiated Idioblast" is the real codename for Kei. Although the dubbing of the first volume was rather good, the second one is truly better and the story seem to pick up in speed. We will probably like the rest quite a lot. We just hope it will be out soon. (See also our review in PA #19.) Color, Hi-Fi Stereo, 90/55 min., English dubbed, Cat.#USR-VD10 & USR-VD15, \$29.95 & \$24.95.

## MACROSS II VOL 1-2

- We must say right away that we don't like "Macross II". It's not that the designs are not good (on the contrary) or that the music is bad (it's quite good). The problem is the lack of an atmosphere, of a certain mood that you feel when you watch "Macross: The movie" and "Flashback 2012", that little something that makes you care for the characters, that makes you sit on the edge of your seat wishing that Hikaru and Misa escape whatever predicament they are in. We feel nothing like this when looking at "Macross II". The first volume (episodes one and two) made us think that it could be interesting. The characters and the mecha designs were adequate, the music was not bad at all, etc. Nothing really happened, but it was nice to watch. Volume two (episodes three and four) has a lot of action, but the animation is not as nice as the first one and the feeling that "Macross II" is nothing more than a attempt to squeeze as much cash as possible from the name "Macross" starts to sink in. Of course, this does not diminish the quality of the work U.S. Renditions did on the series. True, some of the voices in the first volume were a little, well, slow. This was corrected in the second volume. All and all, this is a (near) perfect dubbing job for a beautiful but cold and unfeeling series. (See also our review in PA #19.) Color, Hi-Fi Stereo, 60/55 min., English dubbed, Cat.#USR-VD11 & USR-VD16, \$24.95 each.

## THE GUYVER VOL 1-2

- First of all, we cannot recommend people to watch this animation. Not because the dubbing is not well done (it's not as good as "Macross II" or "Iczer-one", but is still acceptable), but because we find "Guyver" pointless and gory. One cannot actually imagine someone watching this and liking it. We know there are fans of this animation and this dubbing will make them happy. Sorry, but we're not one of them. Recommended only for the fans. Color, Hi-Fi Stereo, 60 min. each, English dubbed, Cat.#USR-VD9 & USR-VD12, \$24.95 each.

## DANGAIO VOL 1-2-3

- This was one of the first "real" (as in "in its original language") Japanese animation we ever saw. We were really impressed with the character designs (Toshihiro Hirano is now one of our favorite artists) and with the "Dangato" robot. It featured the adventures of four young espers going around in space looking for both their lost past and homeworld. We liked it, but, for this kind of cute babes/mecha and big monsters stories, we prefer "Iczer-three" (oh surprise, the characters of "Iczer-three" are also by Toshihiro Hirano) and "Gunbuster". Nonetheless, Dangaio is a good introduction to the genre. Since it was one of the first subtitling/dubbing jobs ever done, it is not perfect (no subtitling/dubbing job is perfect), but it can hold its own against the stuff done today. "Dangaio" is recommended to anyone who liked "Gunbuster" and "Iczer-one" and is yearning for more. Color, Hi-Fi, 45 min. each, English subtitles, Cat.#USR-VD2, USR-VD7 & USR-VD8, \$34.95 each.

## APPLESEED

As fans of the "Appleseed" manga, we were among the eager fans waiting to see this animation. And then we saw it and felt betrayed and deceived. The story was incomprehensible in Japanese, but is even worse when you understand it. It's a mix-up of book one, two and three of the manga, but the elements are so compressed together that we did not recognize any of the manga's most endearing traits. The characters were also completely wrong. Deunan is too stocky and her face doesn't work, Briareos is too small and his voice seems wrong. In fact, the only positive things that can be mentioned about this animation are the mechas (especially the Landmare) and the music. A big, big let down. Color, Hi-Fi Stereo, 70 min., English subtitles, Car. #USR-VD4, \$34.95.

## BLACK MAGIC M-66

As with "Appleseed", the other animated version of Masamune Shirow's manga, we found "Black Magic M-66" to only be a kind of adaptation from the manga. Although the characters are much better looking than in "Appleseed", we feel that the atmosphere is wrong. Doesn't anyone look at Shirow's stuff before they animate it? It's plainly clear to us that characters and backgrounds that are too cartoonish do not work with "Appleseed" or "Black Magic". What we're looking for is an atmosphere à la "Silent Möbius: the motion picture". I just hope that Shirow will step-in the next time an animation studio adapts one of his mangas. We're sure that the result would not be disappointing at all! Color, Hi-Fi Stereo, 48 min., English subtitles, Car. #USR-VD6, \$34.95.

## MACROSS II

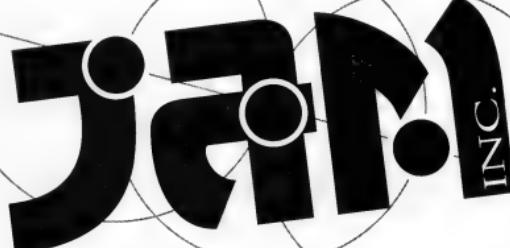
Probably the most expected animation of the last two years, Macross II, like everything that is very expected, is disappointing. The animation is very good (a lot better than the first series). The songs and BGMs are very disappointing and not as good as the first MACROSS. The story: it is nearly impossible to judge it until we have seen the complete series. We have watched the first two episodes and, although it is a "sequel" to MACROSS, it seems that it is quite repetitive of the first series and presents lots of inconsistencies or exaggerations: 1) the hero work for a TV news station, SNN, that seems as well equipped as any modern army on the battle field; 2) the hero and his companion, while filming in the middle of the battle (they ride a modified Valkyrie — it seems that it will be as easy for a teenager to have a Valkyrie piloting license as one today to have a car license!) manage to ger in one of the main ships of the Marduke fleet, meet the un-guarded "special weapon" of the enemy and kidnap her (and as the Valkyrie is only a two-seater, Dennis manages to be killed so Hibiki can take Ishar with him!). Pretty good field journalism, isn't it? 3) The battle is happening in Mars' orbit and nothing is shown on

how Hibiki and Dennis managed to get there in Valkyrie; 4) when the Mardukes attacked, Earth people launched the "Minmei Counter-attack": an holo-video clip of Minmei (though it doesn't look like her), supposed to terrorize the enemy. Not only didn't it work, but the Mardukes have their own singer (actually it sounded more like an exercise in vocalization) that surprise the Earthian and gave their people some courage. A kind of video fight of the future. Ridiculous!

Aside from those "minor" details, MACROSS II seems, at first, to be quite an animation. The dubbing of the first episode seems strange (particularly Dennis' voice) and some voice actors sounds like beginners. Everything is back to (expected) normality in episode two. USR Renditions has made a good choice and a good work. Also, the fact that this animation was so much expected, that we have seen very quickly some fan's subtitling, that USR literally jumped on this title to dubbed it, and the fact that it is not a top quality OVA, seems to give reason to Vrillwhal (see his opinion letter in PA #16). But we don't want to re-launch that debate, as Mister "V" himself has been quite mute since then.

CJP





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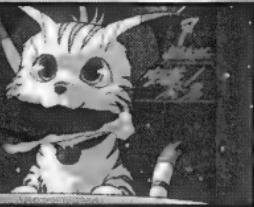


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# SUPER CAT GIRL NUKUNUKU

by Jean Carrières

What happens when you put the brain of a dead cat in the body of a female android with a funky pink haircut? Imagine a mix of the "REANIMATOR", "PET SEMETARY" and lots of laughs and you get Nuku Nuku! At the time of this writing, there were only two episodes of this series available, but since only 10 minutes are required before addiction occurs, two episodes are plenty enough.

Reminiscent of A-Ko, Nuku Nuku is superstrong, superfast and very, very fluffy. She lives with a scientist and his son, and protects them from the boy's mother who uses a duo of crazed "nymphettes", equipped with the latest gadgets and weaponry, to try and retrieve the boy. This leads to a series of outrageously hilarious scenarios where Nuku Nuku *free falls* from the sky, throws a tree at a helicopter, wrestles with a power armor, puts a sidecar to her bicycle, drives the latter at warp factor 9, tangles with a robotic octopus, swims like a mermaid and sinks a boat (you can breathe now).

Best of all is that the series is done tongue-in-cheek and with a flair for humorous snapshots. From huge sweat beads appearing on the characters' faces, to Riding Bean-like grins, going through the maniacal laughter and dramatic poses, Nuku Nuku brings a fresh approach to the century-old brain-in-the-machine concept. The animation is crisp, lively, wonderfully entertaining, and by no other than Yuzo Takada of 3X3 EYES. Get a copy as soon as you can get your greedy little hands on one. It's REALLY worth it.



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# A.D. VISION: A BRIEF HISTORY

by A.D. Vision's Staff



A.D. Vision was accidentally born in August 1992, when the managers of the video divisions of two competing retailers held a meeting to discuss possible methods of coordinating their activities and increasing the public awareness of Japanese animation in Houston, Texas. The original goal of both Matt Greenfield (a

longtime anime fan who, in addition to introducing Anime into the rental programs at several Houston video stores, had been actively involved in Japamation fandom since 1984) and John Ledford (whose GAMETRONIX International video games distributor had recently begun carrying both Japanese laserdisks and videocassettes) was simply to find a way to keep their respective companies from stepping on each other's toes. However, that objective was soon forgotten as it became apparent to both men that what they were both more interested in was the rapidly expanding licensed videotape business. The discussion quickly turned to what anime titles would be good potential releases, and, serendipitously, the NCS-Toho Co., Ltd. production Devil Hunter Yohko was among those brought up. Although not extremely well-known in the U.S., Yohko's inspired combination of bizarre humor, graphic violence and sex seemed ideal, as it filled a genre niche that had, not yet, been tapped by the existing U.S. anime manufacturers.

Of course, at this point, the idea of creating a new anime company was merely idle speculation, but it continued to germinate and grow through a series of telephone calls and personal meetings. By combining Greenfield's background in film and television production, GAMETRONIX's existing staff of Japanese translators and agents, along with both men's extensive list of Japanese contacts and retail and wholesale experience, a new company with over fifteen years of effective experience could be formed overnight. Of course, this is a great simplification, as the

- technical and financial requirements of the proposed company would stagger all but the most dedicated-or insane-of individuals.
- By September 1st, however, A.D. Vision, as it would eventually become known, began to exist in a crude embryonic form. The time had come for a momentous decision: whether to actually invest a tremendous amount of capital into the new venture and acquire an actual anime property or to heed the call of common sense and re-think the entire undertaking. Taking what they knew to be their last free breath for the next three years, A.D. Vision teetered at the edge of the abyss, then took the plunge. The only thing they were sure of was their first objective, the film which had started it all: Devil Hunter Yohko.

- As a series of investors were lined up and negotiations began to license Devil Hunter Yohko, the new company acquired its name through another spur-of-the-moment decision, when a Japanese representative asked John Ledford which company he was dealing with. Realizing that GAMETRONIX and the new entity would be very distinct from one another, Ledford ad-libbed the name A.D. Vision, pulling inspiration from a laserdisc that happened to be sitting on his desk. Subsequent efforts to come up with fancier names such as Anime Express and Otaku Warehouse, were quickly discarded when it was realized that, alphabetically, A.D. Vision would always be at the top of any listing of US-based anime companies. As to what the initials A. and D. actually stand for, that remains a classified secret, although the words "Another Damned video company" seemed to be on many lips as the new company began to put together its first release, which had been VERY optimistically planned for late November of 1992.

- As the "flagship" of the new company, it was decided early on that no expense would be spared in making Devil Hunter Yohko the best-looking videotape on the market. Production began in October, with the final production master being done entirely in D-2, a digital video format offering the highest possible quality of sound and video. Bypassing the usual "bump-down" system of using 1" or Beta cam dubbing masters, arrangements were made to have the final VHS videocassette mastered directly from D-2. To date, A.D. Vision is the only U.S. anime company to work exclusively in the digital domain. The production problems were further compounded by the lack of suitable artwork for the videocassette release, the Japanese producers having destroyed or sold off most of the original cels and art. Artists Lorraine Reyes and Tim Lindquist pumped out dozens of designs in as many weeks, and cels from

private collections were pressed into use to finish the jackets on schedule. Rough timing began even before the D-2 master arrived from Japan, using a system familiar to many anime fans, the ubiquitous Commodore Amiga™, while a method was worked out to convert the data from the economical home computers into the state-of-the-art equipment that would be used for the actual subtitling. Simultaneously, translation was being carried out on several levels. Head translator Ichiro Arakai and assistant Dwayne Jones produced a rough draft in a single afternoon that was then refined over the next several weeks. As the author of the final screenplay, Matt Greenfield went through no less than five drafts of the script, with each version being subjected to a test screening in front of a live audience. Local anime groups such as Anime NASA and the West Houston Anime Troup (W.H.A.T.) found themselves pressed into service as willing test subjects, swayed by the promise of free promotional posters, while unsuspecting non-otaku were often shanghaied off the street by the crazed production team. Amazingly, everything seemed to be on schedule. This is how things normally seem right before the bottom falls out of the bucket.

A.D. Vision's first major setback occurred when the 1992 November issue of *Animag*, in which A.D. Vision had purchased the full inside front cover, failed to go to press, leaving Yohko with no advertising except for the back

- cover of Antarctic Press' *Dojinshi* #1 and a small blurb in *Comic Buyer's Guide*. Combined with a printing error on the first run of the videocassette jackets, the loss of major advertising in the fan press forced the company to reluctantly push the release date back to the 15th of December.
- Losing the lucrative Christmas season for Yohko temporally stymied A.D. Vision's forward momentum, and plans for an in-house produced magazine, *A.D. Visions*, were temporarily put on hold. As the first quarter of 1993 began, however, the sales of Devil Hunter Yohko began to take off. By mid-February, negotiations were finalized for *A.D. Vision's* second release, the fan-favorite *Sol Bianca*, which began shipping on April 19th, 1993. Not ones to rest on their laurels, *A.D. Vision* has already announced their third release, a combined video release of the forthcoming animated feature *GUNNM-Rusty Angel* and *GUNNM-Tears Sign*, to be released in the U.S. and Canada under the title *Battle Angel*. Current *A.D. Vision* plans call for at least two more releases for calendar year 1993, and the company is also beginning production of their own comic book line, the first of which will be the frequently postponed *A.D. Visions* magazine.
- Not bad for a company that's only seven months old... ☺



## DEVIL HUNTER YOHKO

A between PORKY'S and HELLRAISER, DEVILHUNTER YOHKO mixes bizarre humor with graphic scenes of sex and violence. Stuningly successful in Japan, it has already spawned one sequel and a second will debut later this year. High school student Yohko Mano learns that she is the 108th generation in a family of Demon Hunters — and that she is obligated to save the world from an invasion of bloodthirsty demons! As students and teachers alike are possessed by the demons, Yohko's supernatural powers materialize — demons, beware! Color, Stereo, 45 min., English subtitles, Cat. # VHSSY-001, \$29.95.



## SOL BIANCA

Can five young women take on the armed might of an entire solar system and win? If they're the treasure-hungry crew of the interstellar pirate ship *Sol Bianca*, the odds are just about even! The liberation of an entire civilization, the destruction of a few dozen cities, and some of the most amazing air and ground sequences ever animated are all included in this spectacular adventure. Directed by Katsuhiro Akiyama (*BUBBLEGUM CRISIS*, *GALL FORCE*, 1), with unusually realistic character designs by Naoyuki Onda and incredible full-figure animation, *SOL BIANCA* is a must-see for any anime fan! Color, stereo, 63 min., English subtitles, Cat. # VHSSD-001, \$39.95.



# VOICE OF THE FREEDOM FIGHTER

## Dear PA,

I really enjoyed your last ANIME SHOWER SPECIAL, not because I'm a pervert, but because I loved the layout. I liked the way you had more pictures on the page than words and the amount of different anime covered. I'd like to see your regular format become more like this. Maybe try to get as many pictures of as many series as possible and print brief synopsis next to each, like the GALL FORCE synopsis, but a little more in depth. Then have two feature stories, I liked the LODOSS WAR article in issue #16, and then an interview, tidbits, and letters column in the end. Or some format similar to that. I know that's what I would like to see.

I'm sure people ask you all the time to run a comic or short story in your magazine, but I (and I'm sure many others) prefer you keep the space for anime & manga information, especially if the comic isn't going to be a translated Japanese manga. I just want to see more pictures of more anime. Other than that I think your magazine is great. You have really come a long way from your first issue. The larger format, your page set-up and your latest covers look outstandingly professional in comparison. Keep up the good work.

As for ideas for your next special, how about a mecha special. The only magazine I can find with enough shots of robots from as many various series as possible is HOBBY JAPAN. I'm not interested in how they can be converted to be played in BATTLETECH™ or all the statistics (except maybe for height) of each robot, we can leave that for MECHA PRESS, but I would like to see shots of them using different weapons. Another idea is a series that would deal with mystical worlds that could include everything from LODOSS WAR, 3X3 EYES, and VAMPIRE PRINCESS MIYU to ARION and even DUNBINE. You could also make a Letters and Fan Art Special, that would give you some extra room in your regular issues and get some of the not so good fan art out of them too. I personally don't like seeing a lot of fan art on the pages, but some people like to see their fan

- art and letters in some kind of publication. I'd rather have my letters read, my thoughts considered and shared, and then have them thrown away.

- Well I think I got all my opinions and thoughts down for the moment. Thank you for your time.

- Sayonara

**Kevin R. Pothress**  
**Anchorage, AK**

- Our new layout is pretty close to what you suggest. It has a look like MECHA PRESS and definitely give more space to anime features and more pictures. We kept two pages of letters, but have already stopped using fan art (save with the letters), as you probably noticed. We also give more attention to "soft" anime and that is why a Mecha Special is not likely. We will once in a while cover some mecha shows, but we already have MECHA PRESS for this. MP is not only gaming: it is also modeling and mecha in all their forms. It aspires to be like HOBBY JAPAN and, starting with issue #7, it will have nice pictures of mechas. Have a look at it again, I am sure you will**



- like it. PA & MP are more like the two faces of the same coin. You can have the anime-only side, or the mecha/action/modeling/gaming, or both. We now advertise a special joint subscription rate that will be a real deal. With it, you will have a monthly magazine.

## Dear IANUS Team,

- Greetings from Ohio. Sorry about not sending this letter of support in earlier (what? Just buying the magazine isn't enough?!?), but I've been busy. Actually, I've been jotting down notes & comments that I wanted to send in, but I put off because of studies or employment. Now I'm trying to get these notes organized from the last two years to send to you. Get ready, 'cause here I go!

- First, PROTOCULTURE ADDICTS requested info about their readers (that was about two years ago). Well, I'll be a 26 year-old man in January and I'm a licensed veterinary technician. I enjoy your magazine, especially the Anime Gossip column, and I feel that the mag should keep the name (to remember and honor its roots), but continue on without ROBOTECH. Maybe someday the SENTINELS will be animated, but let's not ignore the rest of the world in our sorrow. As for the rest of the answers that were requested, well, PROTOCULTURE ADDICTS is already doing what I would have suggested: look into non-ROBOTECH anime and manga.

- Second, if you ever revive the "Uh?!, Chronicle of the Odd & Bizarre..." articles, here's a piece to include. In the OVA BLACK MAGIC M-66, there is a scene where the characters are looking at a photo in a newspaper. Under the photo, there is a review of THE MUPPET MOVIE. About one of Fozzie Bear's routines, to be specific.

- Third, I have also purchased copies of both the ANIME SHOWER SCENES and I've also read the letter pages to THE DIRTY PAIR book 3 issue 4 by Adam Warren and Toren Smith (I'm sorry that Toren bought it in the GUNBUSTER series). My point is about how nudity is supposed to be pornographic. Have you ever listened to the comedian George Carlin? He said that he would rather have his children see two people making love instead of trying to kill each other (hmm, what would FATAL ATTRACTION fall under?). In the same concert, he suggested changing the word "kill" with the four letter word of fornication in movies and shows. He did a small sample and it did surprise me at how many times people hear the "kill" and don't think anything of it. Welcome to America, where violence is acceptable and nudity is pornographic.

- Fourth, translated animation that is edited for its audience (read: kiddified). I will look for a copy of the original show just to see why the edited version is so sloppy in scenes. I prefer to buy legit copies over

bootlegs, when and if they are offered, because of the quality. My thanks to the wonderful companies who have realized that people over the age of 12 can also like animated shows. I had what Family Home Entertainment did to MACROSS: DO YOU REMEMBER LOVE? a.k.a. CLASH OF THE BIONOID. Why did they cut out the music? I don't understand what some American singers are saying and I still listen to their songs. The 5 second shower scene I can understand, a few of the more graphic scenes, I can understand. Why did they leave in the Budweiser frames? Music and graphical violence is cut out, but leave in the near subliminal "Bud" ad. Reality check please...

Fifth & finally, I would like a copy of your submission guidelines along with information about who retains the rights for published materials. The reason why I am asking is this: I am collaborating with some artists for a comic strip that is anime & manga related. The tentative title is THE ANIME ZONE and it will feature different events that happen to various anime characters. It is comparable to the Anime Gossip articles, only with artwork.

I do like the new format of PROTOCULTURE ADDICTS, and I do believe that it is a quality product. I hope that you enjoyed this letter and I also hope that JANUS PUBLICATIONS may someday include THE ANIME ZONE in PROTOCULTURE ADDICTS. Enjoy good health!

Sincerely,

**Joe Holsinger**  
Pickerington, OHIO



- **Thanks for your comments. We don't really have guidelines for the magazines. We ask people to send their article and if it is good we will use it. We are still planning to pay for contributions, but not yet (probably in a couple of issues). Unfortunately, we don't want to use fannish stuff anymore to keep (and improve) the seriousness and professionalism of the magazine. And NO comic strips (unless it is by a Japanese manga artist). Sorry. We are mainly looking for synopses and in-depth articles.**
- 
- 

#### Dear PA,

- I would like to take you to task regarding your lackadaisical attitude regarding the dubbing of anime.
- 

- First off let me say that I am a fan of the subtitle. The Japanese voice actors are chosen from dozens of auditions for the perfect voice qualities needed for the characters. Anyone who disagrees with this should check the English NADIA and compare it with the skill and appropriateness of the voice actors of the Japanese originator. Compared with the originator the dubbing is a disgrace.
- 

- I am not totally against dubbing, just against bad dubbing. The dubs I have heard from the Streamline and US Renditions qualify in my book as bad dubbing. The voice actors are woefully inept, and the production values are lower than the hover skirts on a Rick-Dom.
- 

- But what is troubling me more than the industry's penchant for poor dubs is PROTOCULTURE ADDICTS' for dismissing substandard translations. A bad dub is more than just "slightly bothersome" and "annoying", it is one more hurdle in the path achieving the widespread recognition of anime that we all crave.
- 

- When a first-time anime viewer is exposed to these productions as his first impression of anime, he won't notice the clever Japanese musical score, he won't notice the complex plot or the fluid animation, that's because his skin will be crawling the second a character opens his mouth; and the prospective anime fan will head for the hills.
- 

- And why not? How can you expect the public to stomach the sort of asinine voice acting which permanently stereotyped the imported martial arts films as object of comical ridicule?
- 

- What can be expected is for the American and Canadian anime fans to let their opinions be known. If I am in the minority then I guess I have nothing to complain about. But, if (like I suspect...) most fans feel as I do, then there are at least two major anime distributors who are doing a major disservice to the anime community.
- 

- I propose a readers survey. You could have questions regarding readers favorite characters etc., but also the following two questions: "Do you prefer dubbed or subtitled videos?" and "Do you feel that the companies dubbing anime are consistently producing a quality product?".
- 

- Now since you depend on these companies for advertising, I can see why you would never do this and why you treat them with kid gloves in your reviews, but everyone suffers because of it. They suffer, you suffer, but most important of all the fan suffer. It's high time PROTOCULTURE ADDICTS becomes one of the industry's watchdogs, instead of one of its lap dogs.
- 

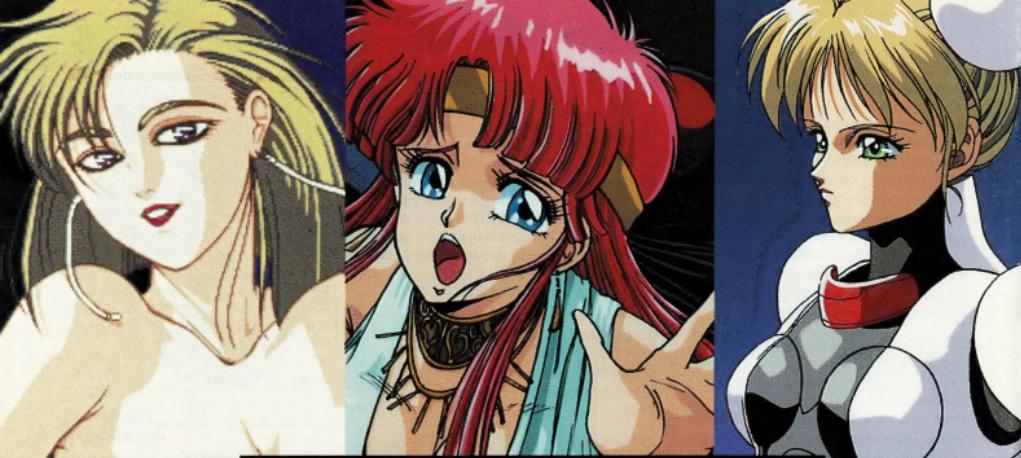
Sincerely,

**Paul Rigby Jr.**  
Jacksonville, FL

- **Think whatever you want but try to understand that the average viewer don't like subtitles. The companies who are releasing the dubs are not doing it for the fans: they aim at a larger audience and they don't care about what fans think and like. For my part I do prefer subtitles, but it is just that I got often tired of reading my anime and I want to relax and enjoy them. Dubs are reaching more people, making them discovering anime. I prefer to have dubs than nothing. OK, they are not perfect, but they will surely improve with time. The problem with fans is their lack of tolerance. I will give you soon the result of the survey that I have included in PA #18. We aren't anyone's lap dog. We just don't like unnecessary bashing and want to give to everyone a fair chance. If something is really bad, we will say it. We are here to serve the fans and I am sure we choose the best way.**
- 



THEY BOTH REGRETTED THE CONFRONTATION THOUGH THE OUTCOME WAS OBVIOUS. MRS. POTATO HEAD SOON RECEIVED A CALL FROM THE CITY MORGUE AND KENSHIRO SPENT THE NEXT WEEK COMBING POTATO OUT OF HIS HAIR.



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